779 881 792 It is this renunciation[1] which we symbolize in the shinbyu ceremony when a boy leaves his home and lives in the order. A parent who fails to hold the ceremony or get his son initiated in some other way fails in his first duty towards his son, and those who hold a shinbyu for orphans or the sons of the poor achieve great merit.

To provide a background symbolic of Prince Siddhartha's circumstances, parents spend as much as they can afford; a flagged pavilion is put up before the house, a multitude of people are invited for feasting, the boy is dressed in princely garments and jewels, and rides around the town on a white horse, with a procession following. For him to return and wash the powder off his face, to doff the turban and show the newly shaven head, to change the glittering clothes of silk for a plain yellow [292] robe showing golden on the bare brown skin,—this is moving indeed. And when he comes back the next day in procession with other monks, his eyes cast down and his bowl before him, his mother makes obeisance to him for the first time, not as her son now but as one of the priestly order, a hpongyi, a "great glory". That must be a moment of spiritual plenitude in a mother's life.

881 792 I do not remember much about my brother's shinbyu, but I remember the beauty of his face as he came back in procession on that first day. A good face has its nobility enhanced by the complete absence of such adornment, even as is provided by the frame of hair or the line of neck clothing; it has to stand alone. I am often struck with the beautiful calm faces of some older monks. There is a look of repose which they wear easily after years of daily meditation and freedom from petty irritations and personal relationships, and a glow to the brown skin which is the result of years spent in clean and open surroundings, with sufficient to eat, and regularity of hours; the strongly marked eyebrows giving a nobility to the face when the head has been shorn. The unconscious reflection of this look on the face of a small boy touches us profoundly; there is a sweet solemnity on the young shaven face; the most mischievous boys become awed and chastened without any prompting.

881 792 565 [563] In recent years, we have had a full dress shinbyu in the family for my husband's nephew, Sao Sai Long, who as the heir to the Shan State of Kengtung was initiated into the priesthood with the full panoply due to Buddhist royalty. A long wide bamboo pavilion was set up, beginning with a high shelf for the offerings to all the monasteries in the town, the next platform for the monks who were to receive Sao Sai Long into their monastery, the next lower for the attendant boys who were also to be initiated, and for the *palin* (the jewelled *chaise longue* on which Sao Sai Long was to recline), the next for the family, and successively lower ones for the various grades of the people. (The

[1] The Great Renunciation of Prince Siddhartha--Analyst]

527 The younger children of the families also took the precepts, but it was not considered wrong if they felt too hungry or faint to keep to them. Everyone packed up and went home from the resthouse at about four in the afternoon. I found these duty evenings very long and depressing. There was no dinner, my father and mother told beads all evening, and at night their mattresses were removed and they slept only on mats.

428 342 We were now living in Grandfather's old house. Grandfather had left it to the four youngest among his children, and my mother had bought out the shares of the others because she was sentimentally attached to it and could not bear to see it pulled down. To others it had seemed an unwieldy shape taking so much good teak which could have built a compact modern house. My mother set about the task of transforming in into a comfortable domestic family house with a nicely disposed front and back, but it was a difficult task. There was no neat garden plot, no face, no bedrooms, but long stretches of gallery and verandah. We fenced off the well so that the village could continue to use it without infringing our privacy, the old big kitchen was dismantled and a compact kitchen made of one of the store-rooms near the washing platform, the old maternity room was stocked with commodes and made into a lavatory, the powder room was used as box-room. Six of us shared the big bedrooms. The altar, the water-pots and meals continued where they had always been. There was a large expanse of shining floor for visitors to sit on mats, and the head of the long verandah held a few chairs. The stable was cleaned up and given to Apana, now an old and rheumy-eyed man, and the downstairs hall, where a school had been, now held our stocks of rubber.

511 563 775 But still there was always so much space, the house seemed vast and empty, and the life so different from our district government houses with a crowd of servants, young men and dependents of all kinds. We felt the change acutely. My sisters were still children who played with each other and had plenty to eat during their short holidays, but I found the evenings silent and sad with the lifeless echoes which the dim light of the floorboards used to send up. I had been to stay at the house for short periods just before my Grandfather died, when I was about three or four years old. Here, where we washed our faces, we looked across to a house now mysteriously barred with a blank wooden face, but then inhabited by *ta-yok chi-thay-ma*, tiny-footed China-women, fabulous creatures according to my nurses, who, though they were slit-eyed and could curse you in an unknown tongue, could be sent reeling back with one touch of a finger. The ta-yok chi-thay-ma had other macabre qualities also. Her child had a big black patch of hair on its arm because it was the reincarnation of his dead sister. At the death of this

1: Mi Mi Khaing 1-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Chinese

previous child, the ta-yok chi-thay-ma had frantically grabbed a piece of charcoal and had smudged the arm of the dying child, saying: "If I get this child back in my next labour, may I know her by this mark." Down below the arum bushes grew close and dark against the fence. They had frightened us, like green snakes that must not be touched, because the leaves made your tongue itch with an intangible and incurable itch although the roots were made into delicious soups. In Grandfather's bedroom was a window looking into the maternity chamber, still padlocked with a lock whose key had been lost nearly twenty years ago, and a patch of light wood nailed over the hole which a robber had made with the point of his damyaung. From the maternity chamber, also, an aunt had thrown a basin of washing water to splash on an uncle sitting below, with whom she had quarrelled and whose hpon would be lowered by the ignobility of the woman's labour. For my mother the house must have had sharp memories, but she never spoke of them while there because my father became ill shortly after. This oppressed her spirits, and made her think only with sorrow of her dead mother and father, her brothers and sisters, so many now dead and the rest scattered far and never returning after the death of Grandfather.

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1: Mi Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Indians
Europeans

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

AFTER a stay of three years in England, I set out on a return journey home with a band of friends and compatriots. This was in August 1940, and the long sea voyage round the Cape gave us time for all the thoughts which filled our minds at the prospect of seeing Burma again after three and four years abroad. Besides our excitement at the approach of family reunions and the delights of once again eating Burmese food, we wondered whether the events in the outside world during the past few years, and the outbreak of the European war, had filled our people with interest, excitement or alarm for international events. 175

Before I left Burma I had been a student among companions who had only a passing interest in affairs outside Burma, so filled had our minds been with separation from India in 1936, the general elections for the first House of Representatives in Burma's history, the formation of the first Ministry under Dr. Ba Maw, student strikes for the amendment of the University Act, and the fervid chastising campaigns on the part of monks and fanatic students for the wearing of thick homespun by women instead of the scandalously transparent imported muslins. The older people at home also turned their eyes along the same channels. Of Hitler and Mussolini our aunts had heard, as of caricatured figures on a distant screen, and Ba Maw's admiration of Hitler's position of power was obscured by his eccentric passion for gorgeous attire, which was much more in the public eye. 175 668

The letters which I received from friends in Burma during my three years in England had also been too full of the Indian-Burman riots which raged violently in 1938, the industrial strikes in the oilfields, and the repeated school and university strikes which added to the general domestic unrest of those years, to tell me much else. But since then we had read of the opening of the Burma Road as an event of world interest; later we had read with feelings of surprise, amusement and expectancy of the face-slapping, debagging and stuffing of passports into the mouth to which the Japanese had subjected Englishmen in the ports of China, as something new and startling in our time; and later still, the closing of the Burma Road at the insistence of the Japanese Government made us suddenly connect the European politics which so excited our English friends with the events in places which surrounded Burma, though not 175 578 563.

yet with Burma itself. Brought up as a complacent child of a government officer in Burma, this was the first time that I realized how we had unconsciously thought of England, the British Empire, as a permanent world force during our lifetime—a force with which we might bargain advantageously or without success, but one that our fathers and we had taken for granted for all the time that we could remember. But now we realized it as one power—leading perhaps—amongst other powers in the West, and we realized also the existence of Japan and remembered how the Burmans who visited it always brought back stories of the beauty, progress and good manners of the country.

We left our English friends in the first half of August 1940, as they waited, braced for an invasion, to go to what they and we considered a war-free country. I was in the Ladies Room of a big restaurant in London just before I left, when the attendant who watched me wrap my longyi asked me which country I came from. "Burma," I told her. "Burma," she repeated uncertainly. "Is there a war there, Miss?" "No," I said laughing, "but there is a Road there." Yet I was only amusing myself. As we set out home, the furthest that our thoughts of war and Burma ranged, was to wonder whether the Burma Road and the recent closing of it had made people think more about Japan and China than they had done in 1937, when the outbreak of war between the two countries had caused little excitement except that some of my friends became consistent boycotters of Japanese goods. We also wondered vaguely whether trade had been affected, and whether thought and general social conditions had been stimulated with the world-shattering event of a European war, not dreaming that this was but the splash of a pebble compared to the tempest that was to follow.

Since I had left Burma, my mother and brother and sisters had settled themselves in Rangoon and I wondered how the city would seem after the big cities of the West. Rangoon is not one of the ancient cities of Burma. Its present position in the life of the country and people is a complete turnabout from its traditional place, for in days gone by it had attracted the inhabitants through spiritual rather than material renown. While Pagan, Ava, Toungoo and Mandalay rose and fell in political and commercial importance, Rangoon—Dagon as it was called—continued unchangingly a seat of pilgrimage, connected with fable and divinity, forming an actual link with another world cycle that existed in the universe before this present arrangement of Mount Myinmo, with its surrounding heavenly, earthly and hellish regions, was formed.

For it was on the hill called Theinguttara, which now casts its shadow on the city of Rangoon with its crown of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, that the omens for the spiritual life of this world cycle were manifested, before

361 teachers. There were similar colonies of Burmese in the eastern parts
177. of Rangoon—Yegyaw, Bahan, Tamwe and Pazundaung—but none so
36 pleasant as Kemmendine.

When we were young, my mother's stock of household goods bought
361 from their places of manufacture had shown us all the small industries
438 of Burma. Now my sisters appeared to be as determined to do my
• 563 Rangoon shopping from the most orthodox sources, and I learnt that to fit me out with a new set of Burmese clothes required the services and the varied talents of all communities of the cosmopolitan city. Imported silks, which were bought for longyis in addition to native silks, were the monopoly of merchants from Sind and Bikaner—houses of Ramchandra, Tejumal, Lekraj and others—who had set up windows in the modern Scott Market of Rangoon, and whose salesmanship had flowered in Burma into something vastly different from the nonchalance which they display in their native land. They offered cigarettes to casual buyers who fingered the usual run of silks, supplemented them with sweet coloured drinks from the sherbet stall behind the shops when they went on to more expensive satins, and if they ventured further into fine brocades and laces, dishes of ice-cream appeared as they waited for the material to be cut and measured.

Cotton longyis for day and night wear in the house took us to the western Burmese quarter of Rangoon. Here, in Goods Bazaar Row, the family firm of *U Hsin-Daw Htay:* husband and wife married in business, lived in the upper floor of their house, and stacked the lower floor with hundreds of cotton prints, made in Japan but manufactured with such an eye to Burmese requirements as regards texture, colours, design and width, that these *tha-yet-htè* longyis, as they were called, seemed to most people as Burmese as Bassein umbrellas or Mandalay slippers. All over Burma the women wore these longyis. The transplanters of the paddy, the young servant maids in a-so-ya mins' houses, the girls in Ye and a thousand other villages, women in bazaars and minkadaws themselves, all wore various qualities of bright tha-yet-hte prints bought for 10 annas to Re. 1/4 a longyi length of 1¾ yards. U Hsin and Daw Htay were prosperous; we bought our longyis from them through snobbery, in lots of ten, sitting barefooted on their mat-covered floor, with betel box in front of us, but it was possible to buy tha-yet-hte from the stalls of young Burmese women all along the big Soortee Bazaar and the Scott Market of the Town. These young women form one of Burma's fairest sights.

361 In the days of my schooling, when each new term plunged me into
438 the foreign world behind Convent walls, as my mother completed the shopping for it on the last day of each vacation, I gazed back with longing

and envy at these fair creatures who continued work and home in one long pleasant Burmese continuity. They are girls from the ages of sixteen upward. Probably their parents set them up in these stalls, each separated from its neighbour by a stack of cotton bales, six or seven stalls on a long platform. They come there in the mornings, dressed in crisp muslin jackets and bright longyis, their faces powdered with thanakha and the Five B's, flowers in their hair, and fragrant ground bark on their hands and feet. They open up shop and dust with feather brooms while they shout across to each other the news of the previous evening. Then the whole day unfolds, calling out to food sellers and treating their friends to a succession of delicacies, button-holing the young boy who hawks magazines and tuppenny novels, and reclining against a pile of the tha-yet-hte longyis to read these romances, helping each other to fold up the pieces after a troublesome customer has gone, anything but making an earnest business of their profession. They always looked so cool and pretty and indifferent beside the small Indian storekeepers who flanked their platforms and solicited passers-by for patronage. "Oh to be a bazaar girl!" I still thought when I was in the University; "to pass unchaperoned days, reading novels and eating sweets, to have time to be powdered and neatly dressed, and only now and then be disturbed by someone who wants to buy a longyi." 361 438

Our starched white muslin jackets are made out of fine transparent muslin manufactured in England, and sent out in bales of 11 yards with the quality stamped in Burmese characters, and on the jacket a florid illustration of the quality-name—names such as *Nat-thami, Sein ta-hsok, Shwe Pan-gaing, Mè Nyo:* Heavenly Damsel, Cluster of Diamonds, Golden Spray of Flowers, Dusky Maiden—and imported by both Indian and Burmese traders. 294 439 563

The making up of the jackets was the monopoly of Chinese tailors; our *tayok-kalay*, little Chinaman, lived in the crowded quarter of Yegyaw in a barnlike room which was carpenter's shop at one end and tailor's at the other. The tailor's end had a row of shelves along the wall in to which the finished garments and uncut material were shoved, higgledy-piggledy in paper bags on which the merest scribble denoted owner and date of order. In front of this was the counter on which the cutter was at work, and separating it from the carpentery end was a table at which one or two half-clad men always seemed to be eating noodles or reading a Chinese newspaper, of which there were three in Rangoon. In spite of this, the tayok-kalay never confused an order for garments which had to fit so meticulously and always delivered them in a snow-white condition. He charged 9 annas for each fine handsewn garment, and for modern girls managed to cut twelve out of the eleven-yard piece. This 294 563 441 465

294 was sweated labour indeed. Possibly he paid the cutter two pice, the
• 563 seamstress three annas, the button-loop maker two annas, for each
441 garment. We met one of the button-loop makers one evening as she
466 brought a pile of finished garments, a Chinese girl of ten years, with eyes which looked tired from two years of exquisite hemming on the ten button loops of each Burmese jacket, nine jackets each day. When we had got our jackets the tayok-kalay added up our three bills into one on his abacus. There may be many ways of using an
[405 abacus, but our tayok-kalay's was bafflingly simple. He had each
803] bead on the first rung representing one anna, each on the second one representing four of these, that is four annas; and each on the third rung representing four of these again, that is one rupee, there being sixteen annas in the rupee. When he wanted to add Rs. 5/10 and Rs. 9/11 for example, he represented the first sum on the three rungs above the median bar by drawing down towards it, two beads of the first rung, two of the second and five of the third. Then he represented the second sum on the rungs below the bar by drawing up to it three beads of the first rung, two of the second and nine of the third. He then counted up the sum of all the beads along the bar, pushing back every four beads of the first rung and pulling down one of the second as equivalent, pushing back every four of the second and pulling down one of the third again as its equivalent. All this he did with lightning speed, and, counting finally one bead on the first rung, one on the second and fifteen on the third, he announced Rs. 15/5, a sum which my sisters had arrived at long before by mental arithmetic and had, in vain, been trying to thrust on his notice.

441 I needed also a superior quality comb to wind my hair around in a
563 knot at the back of my head, having given away the old one I had as a curiosity in England. My mother took me to the west end of Rangoon where the Chinese community are concentrated in about six or seven streets, mostly narrow streets of three storeyed houses packed closely together, containing valuable ivory and mother-of-pearl inlaid chairs within and jewellery behind safe doors, but bordering deep and dirty drains and congestion in the street. These were houses of rich men who got their money from trading in indigenous products; by long years of industry building up lakhs of money from the supplying of onions, coconuts, potatoes and other dry goods to the retail shops in bazaars. In the Strand running along the south end of these streets and in the broad Latter Street in the centre of the quarter, were the big emporiums of these traders. One of my father's greatest friends U Chein Swan was a Burma Chinese of this description, and we stayed for short periods in his three-storeyed house in 20th Street when we were children. With

great hospitality they gave our family one floor to put up in whenever we came; they were ten times richer than we, but I never decided whether my days there were more filled with shrinking or with enjoyment. The trays of a myriad red and yellow cakes which were spread before our eyes fascinated me while I was in terror that I would slip into the muddy drain beside which the cake-seller set his tray; the opalescent lights of the mother-of-pearl chairs felt cool and smooth as I stroked them until I suddenly turned and met the stare from the Confucian gentlemen on the wall, with trailing moustaches and Chinese eyes; and the wonder which I felt at the beauty of U Chein Swan's fair daughters with their sparkling diamonds round neck and wrists was tinged with horror at what my nurses made of an orthodox Chinese marriage—the uncanny music, they said, the heavy clothes, and the wedding meal would be followed by the bride belonging forever to the clan of her husband. 441 563

In search of a comb, however, we went to more humble streets where my mother knew the Sino-Burmese comb sellers. The lady of the house came running out of the kitchen as soon as she heard us, set fruit and cool drinks before us and gossiped while she sent for the virgin sheets of tortoise shell. We held them to the light, and picked out the particular area which had the prettiest markings; discussed the shape and size and thickness of the comb and the best arrangement for the honey and brown markings. All this my mother wanted her to do for Rs. 5/- but the lady laughed and wheedled her for six rupees because, she said, sailors had had to go as far as Java to get some of her shells.

Although gold work is still given to Burmese goldsmiths in preference to any other, the trade in diamonds is not in Burmese hands. Rangoon dwellers went to buy their diamonds at Moghul Street where a whole row of Hindu jewellers set up shop fronts and interiors in which high-powered electric bulbs, mirrors upon mirrors, technicolour photographs of the heads of the houses and of Hindu gods, all combined to make an unutterably gaudy display. Still, we took off our slippers on the threshold of these shops, and talked with great respect to the *Babugyi*, who faced us across a velvet padded counter on the floor.

Now I only needed buttons to hold the loops of my jackets together. Except for the occasions when diamond buttons or gold filigree-work buttons are worn, the ordinary Burmese woman wears coloured buttons of cut glass or stone to match her longyi. For the poorest classes, glass buttons imported from Czechoslovakia could be bought at 2 or 3 annas a set of five, complete with glass rings to slip into the loops But these were indeed glassy and did not last long. In Mandalay were the expert Burmese cutters, who for anything from six annas to Rs. 5 produced buttons of every description, plain, speckled, striped; of glass,

441 semi-precious stones, or gold dust, all cut with many tiny facets. We
• 563 once had in our house a heavy glass vase, imported by an English firm, of a dull bluish-black colour. One day a wind mercifully blew the vase on to the floor where it broke into a hundred pieces. My cousin gathered up the pieces and the next time she went to Mandalay her button cutter fashioned them into several sets of round sparkling buttons catching the light and showing now black, now grey, now blue, one set of which I wear to this day. These and the velvet slippers which are universally
[438 565] worn were sold in the market by young Burmese women sitting opposite the tha-yet-htè longyi sellers. The slippers also came from Mandalay, and in the days of the last Burmese king, the common people were forbidden to wear them; they were reserved for royal use alone.

265 563 At last my sisters considered that I was suitably dressed as the elder sister of such fashionable young ladies as they had now grown into, and equipped to attend any social function of the town. Although Burmese people love gathering to eat and drink, hotels and restaurants did not exist in Rangoon society. Both the Western restaurants where people danced and drank alcoholic drinks, and the leading Chinese restaurants where the dolled-up Chinese waitresses served the male customers with playful attentions, were out of bounds for Burmese women, and therefore not greatly frequented by Burmese men either, except in the case of the Chinese hotels as a carousal. Night bazaars were, however, eminently respectable, all Rangoon families being addicted to the habit of eating out as a supper after their dinner at home. They drove in cars to the pavement stalls of Chinatown, Moghul Street and Yegyaw; at Burmese stalls they got out and squatted on the benches provided, while the seller served them from the cooking pot beside her; at Indian and Chinese shops they had a plank thrust through to rest on the doors of the car, and ate sitting there. After eating rich Mohammedan food or delicious Chinese dishes, they drove a few streets further on to eat in the same fashion at an ice-cream or sherbet stall. It was a good life indeed.

546 177. 54 We usually did this after the cinema. While we went to see American films, my mother and her friends invariably went to a Burmese film. There were four Burmese cinema halls in Rangoon, whose box offices were always besieged, but in spite of this the cinema industry in Burma was not a thriving one. Actors and actresses were poor and suffered a social stigma. About twenty-five feature films were produced in Rangoon each year, both sound and silent, by companies whose prosperity never lasted more than a few years. They could often be seen filming their outdoor scenes round the Royal Lakes, the University Estate and the fields around Mingaladon, using studios only for indoor scenes. In pite of this, the effects aimed at were ambitious, especially in the earlier

forced to shed them piece by piece, with the bitter realization that they could not be saved. But war raged like a forest fire which creeps to the farthest corner; like a deluge which rises to the highest hills, for people went northwards and northwards, and still found no sanctuary. 722

Another thing that filled us with wretchedness was the feeling that all the activity of a normal life would cease. The people who thought reasonably in the face of the quick Japanese onrush, that the British would probably have to get out but would prepare, perhaps in India, and be able to return one day, expected to spend the next few years in quiet and hiding from danger. The average person just felt vaguely stunned, that now there would be a negation of all social and economic endeavour; he could not visualize any quick restoration of even a shell of the machinery of normal life which was so alarmingly disappearing before his eyes. Symbolic of this was the emptying of schools and colleges in Rangoon within the day on which the news of Pearl Harbour came through. I shall never forget the effect on my young sisters and their friends. They cried with grief as their parents came to take them home, parting them from friends, sweethearts, all companions of youth, books and the outside world, at best to go into the jungle and live as though they had never known a world looking towards Europe.

I was twenty-five when war broke out, and caught me up, in late February 1942, in a compulsory sea evacuation carried out by the military authorities. I felt as though my heart would break against this awful machine which had suddenly made us so unimportant, and which did not care that I was a Burman amidst the crowd of foreign women it was evacuating, taking me from mother and sisters to whom I could not get news or explanation of my desertion. 000

As we left Inya Hall with lights ablaze, fans full on, store-rooms thrown wide open and waiting for the invader, a vast and inexpressible sadness settled upon me. Dawn had not yet broken, and only the glare from Kemmendine fires still lighted the sky. How sad, how black and empty each familiar house-face looked, with shut eyes and shuttered doors. It was Goodbye indeed, for though the flames are dying now, we shrink from contemplating the charred desolation that we must see on our return.

But it would have been Goodbye in any case for another, happier reason; for I had just met my husband who would have carried me off to a different world in the farthermost corner of Burma, the Kengtung State of Shans, in a land of mountains, narrow valleys and pine trees, where simple people with rosy cheeks cultivate the hillsides and address the ruling family as "Heavenly", where women are not heard, but seen in meekness to obey and fear their husbands. That is another story. 563 562

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Shan AP11

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while nats, bilus, and compound animals called tiger-bilus are also frequent. Each representation is surrounded by a roughly oval tracery of a variety of letters of the alphabet, which form a curious and remarkably effective frame. Thus each animal has a setting of its own. Vacant spaces are filled up in a similar way, and the top and bottom are finished off with a scolloped line. Sometimes these letters are asserted to have a cabalistic meaning, but ordinarily no greater virtue is claimed for them than that of beauty. Mystic squares and ladder-step triangles of serious import are often added in vacant spaces, but all the more important and valid charms are reserved for other parts of the body and for special execution, usually too in vermilion. The old style, and that which prevails still in jungle districts, was to cover every available piece of skin with tracery, so that the figures became blurred and indistinct, and on a dark skin grown old were practically not visible without careful examination, which, considering the portion of the body, was embarrassing to both parties. The newer style, and that specially affected by those with a white skin, is to sacrifice mass of colour to distinctness of outline. The best sayās carry about sample-books with them containing clever drawings, from which the aspirant may select the patterns he likes best, and mark their relative positions before he takes the opium. But tigers, cats, monkeys, and bilus always predominate. To fill up space, and for greater certainty, the name of the animal is often added in the figure, after the style of juvenile art on slates, or with a piece of chalk on blank hoardings.

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The Shans tattoo even more extensively than the Burmans. The figures are carried down well over the calf of the leg and above the navel, while from the upper line tattooed rays run up to the chest and at the back, after the fashion of a rising sun, almost to the nape of the neck. Sometimes the retainers of the Sawbwas, or Shan chiefs, had every part of the body except the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet tattooed. Even the face was covered with the dark-blue markings. Mostly all the men who tattoo charms and cabalistic figures are Shans. They claim and are allowed a special skill in such matters, and as

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Shan AP 11

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they mutter spells and incomprehensible incantations over the "medicine," are looked up to with profound belief and a very considerable deal of awe.

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The tattooing on the loins and legs is universal with all Burmans, and nothing more is ordinarily required; but there are very few who have not charms of some kind tattooed on the arms, back, chest, or even on the top of the head, which is shaved for the purpose. These figures are of all kinds—lizards, birds, mystic words and squares, rings, images of the Buddha, and sometimes merely a few scattered dots, the latter especially on the face, between the eyes, over the ears, or on the chin. The colouring matter is almost always vermilion, with drugs and solutions, according to requirement, mingled with it. The blue dye from the lampblack never disappears, but the red colour of the vermilion gradually fades away and vanishes. Nevertheless figures of this kind, more or less distinct, are to be found on Burmans of all ages, so great is the national superstition. Even the town youths, whose limbs are smooth and "unbreeched" as a girl's, are never without some charms of this kind, if it is only the a-nu se, which enables a man to gain the woman he loves. This "drug of tenderness" is composed of vermilion mixed with a variety of herbs and curious things, prominent among which is the bruised, dry skin of the tauktè, the trout-spotted gekko, whose sonorous cry and fidelity to the house where he establishes himself and brings luck, are well known to all who have visited Burma or Siam. It is very sparingly used, a few round spots arranged in the shape of a triangle being of sufficient virtue to ensure the object aimed at. The commonest place for them is between the eyes, but occasionally the se sayā recommends the lips, or even the tongue, and his advice is always followed. This is the only tattooing which women ever have executed on them, and there are not many of them who have it done. The patient is usually a love-sick maiden who is afraid the object of her affection will escape from her, or a girl whom rolling years warn that she must be quick if she would not be condemned to remain an a-pyo heing, an old maid. Except in very desperate cases, however, they always manage to persuade the operator to place the charm on some part of the

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

body where it will not be visible. If it is not effectual, there is always open to them the signal afforded by kindly national custom to maidens longing for a mate. They cut off the lappets of hair, the bya-bazan, hanging over the ears, and the significance is the same as the white heather of the language of flowers, "heart for sale." In Rangoon the tattooing of a woman has a special signification, not recognised elsewhere. It means that she wants an Englishman for a husband. Poor thing!

Another very universal kind of tattooing is that with a-hpi se. Almost every schoolboy in the country has a specimen of this on him, for does it not prevent him from feeling the pain when he is caned? No amount of falsified hopes in the experience of friends will persuade him that it may not be effectual in his case, and a flogging is often courted as an immediate test of its efficacy. Pride repels the inquiries of chums as to the results, but the experimenter is usually very well behaved for some time. In the case of older men the a-hpi se acts as a talisman against bullets, sword cuts, and ills of that kind. Allied to this are the thenat hpi, which soldiers and dacoits carry about with them. These are the horns of buffaloes and other animals, which may be plain, but are usually elaborately carved with figures according to fancy. They must be quite solid down to the root. A hollow or flaw of any kind deprives them of their virtue. While the man has such a talisman in his hands he cannot be killed. A monkey is a very favourite image to have carved in this way on a sword or dagger hilt, the reference being to the tale of the Ramayana. Of a similar nature are talismans which are especially used by soldiers and dacoits. These hkaung-beit-set are charmed or consecrated objects let into the flesh under the skin. They are of various kinds. Some are gold, silver, or lead; others curious pebbles, pieces of tortoise-shell, or bits of horn, all of them with incantations of mystic character written on them. Many famed dacoits have long rows and curves of them over the chest, showing in little knobs through the skin. When they get into English prisons, an energetic jailer has been known to cut them out, lest they should be pieces of gold or silver, or perhaps precious stones, with which the turnkeys

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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articles for household use. The platform is never deserted. Even long after midnight the voice of the worshipper may be heard in the night air, chanting in solemn monotone his pious aspirations, while on a duty-day, and especially on a feast-day, the laughing, joyous crowd of men and maidens, in their gay national dress, makes the platform of the Shwe Dagôn one of the finest sights in the world.

The Shwe Dagôn Payā is by far the most widely celebrated of the great Buddhist shrines, but there are others which, if not so venerated in other lands, still enjoy an even greater local reputation for sanctity, and attract pilgrims from all parts of Burma and the dependent hills, with now and again a band of pious worshippers from distant countries. Chief among these is the Shwe Hmaw-daw at Pegu, which commands Talaing worship before even the shrine of "the slanted beam" on the Theinguttara hill. The pond close by it was covered with lotus blossoms immediately on the construction of the shapely spire and the great Tha-gyā Min, and countless Byammās and Nat-dēwas assisted at the enshrinement of the relics. As with many other fanes, the king granted to the pagoda, and set apart from secular uses for ever, the whole space round it on which the shadow of the original pile fell between sunset and sunrise. Several hundred families were dedicated to its service, and in 1881 large sums were raised throughout all the low country for the manufacture of a new hti and the gilding of the whole surface, while many wondrous signs in the neighbourhood attested the sacred character of the undertaking. Similarly the Shwe San-daw at Prome, with its multitude of bells on the cramped hill-top, enjoys a special reputation on account of the prophecy there spoken by Shin Gautama himself, and the connection of the payā with the national hero-king, Dwut-tabaung, as recorded in the sacred books. In proof of this there exists to the present day, and may be seen at the foot of the hill, a huge stone with an inscription which none but the pure-minded can read, and few even of them understand. In other places examples of this duganan kye-ganan, a kind of cypher-writing, or cryptograph, as it appears to the unenfranchised, exists, and usually records in mystic phraseology and inverted orthography the alms presented to

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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the pagoda. Many of the lists of donations are, however, graven in a less cramped kyauk-sa, or "stone writing," the givers having probably had a weak hankering after earthly fame. Thus a goodly marble slab with a long list of names may be seen at the Shwe Hmaw-daw, and a tablet near the Mya Thalôn, the Temple of the Emerald Bed (of the Buddha), at Ma-gwe in Upper Burma records how Min Din and Min La-go had in the year 2399 of religion covered the whole payā with yellow cloth, repaired it thoroughly, and had it painted red and gold. An exact account is given of the amount of materials used and the money paid to workmen, and the inscription ends up with a prayer that the family of the donors might be gratified with the birth of a son. Near it is a magic stone with the figure of a hare, surrounded by stars, deeply graven in it to represent the moon, and a peacock to represent the sun.

A frequent adjunct of many pagodas is the Shwe Zet-daw, the imprint of the Lord Buddha's foot. It is too nearly square to command a painter's or sculptor's praise, and the toes are all of the same length, as may be seen in the example carried off by Captain Marryat, the novelist, in the first Burmese war, and now preserved in the British Museum. The sole is divided into a hundred and eight squares (taya shi' kwet), and on them are many lekkhana, representations of monasteries, pyathats, tigers, kalawaiks, henthas, parrots, seipputi fish, and the like, to signify that all things were under the feet of the Great Master. The number of beads on the rosary corresponds with the number of squares on the Shwe Zet-daw. The most famous example is at the pagoda of that name east of Mandalay, the great resort of the Shans, and another well-known one is opposite Magwe, inland from Minbu, where the mud volcanoes are, "the boiling vats of the nagās." But there are many specimens all over the country, not a few with the figure of a nagā, or sea monster, reared over them.

Most famous among the small pagodas is the Kyaik-hti-yo, insignificant in size, but unique from its position. The hill on which it stands takes its name from the payā, and is over three thousand five hundred feet in height. On its summit are numbers of granitoid boulders, many of them

:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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gathered from all parts of the country, many on gilt slabs of marble, a still greater number on sandstone. All day long circles of constantly renewed worshippers chant aloud the praises of the Buddha, and the air is heavy with the effluvia of candles and the odours from thousands of smouldering incense-sticks. Within the precincts of the pagoda is a large tank, tenanted by sacred turtle, who wax huge on the rice and cakes thrown them by the multitudes of pilgrims. Probably not even at the Shwe Dagôn Payā is more enthusiastic devotion shown than at the Payā Gyi in Mandalay. It [563] ● is regarded with special reverence by the Shans.

Near the royal city, about nine miles up the river, on the right bank, is a huge monster of a pagoda, built on a low green bluff, running out from the barren, pagoda-sprinkled Sagaing hills. The groundwork of the great misshapen Mengôn Payā covers a square of 450 feet and its height is 165 feet, about one-third of the elevation intended for it when completed; but Mintaya Gyee, the crack-brained monarch who founded it, ran short of funds, and the building was stopped. Nature was jealous of the miniature mountain —the largest mass of brickwork in the world—and an earthquake in 1838 rent the gigantic cube with fantastic fissures from top to bottom, and cast down great masses of masonry, tons upon tons in weight, and yet not sufficient to destroy the main structure, massive and imperishable as Time itself. There it stands, unharmed alike by rain-floods and blistering suns, and laughing even at earthquakes. According to Burmese custom, Bodaw Payā built a model [341] for the guidance of the workmen. This is called the Pôndaw Payā, and is fifteen feet high. This consists of a bell-shaped dome surmounted by a *sikkhâra*, a pointed spire, and resting on a square plinth of solid brickwork. It is a hybrid between the Shwezigôn and Ananda pagodas of Pagān, and has all the requirements of a place of worship, circuit walls, staircases, ornamented arches, and leogryphs.

Perhaps it was this proud stability which induced King Mindôn Min to attempt an even greater work. He planned a huge shrine to be raised east of Mandalay, under the shadow of the Shan hills. The Yankin-taung Payā was to be larger than the Mengôn monster, and it was to be built

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans) AP1
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feast, are heaped up piles of fruits, savoury curries, cakes, biscuits, and sweetmeats of all kinds, intended for the monks; while scattered about are great *repoussé* silver bowls full of sherbet, gold and silver cups, lamps, mirrors, and all the familiar adornments, fit enough for a private house, but singularly out of place where a gay piece of tapestry hung up barely conceals the image at the eastern side of the rest-house. Maung Maung offers us some lemonade, and we light cheroots, exchange a few compliments with the ladies, and pass on, just as a noisy half-dozen of young Englishmen from one of the mercantile houses come scrambling up the ladder-like steps. It would be well if these gentlemen would remember that each of the houses is to all intents and purposes a private assembly for the night, and that, though the host always welcomes them, he understands English, and does not by any means relish the mocking comments which are lavished on everything, and still less is inclined to approve of the criticisms passed on the ladies. But then there are so few Englishmen in Burma who understand the very shortest sentence in the language that they may be pardoned if they mistake for a promiscuous saturnalia what is nominally a religious ceremony. We leave them joking with Maung Maung and the hostess, as she offers them some beer—beer in a monastery! But then it is known that Englishmen will be there, and the Burman's notion is that an Englishman only leaves off drinking beer when he drinks brandy, so this last indignity is not objected to by the yahans.

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Farther on we come to the place we are specially in search of. The master of ceremonies here is our friend Maung Po Si, a Patama Byan, a certificated theologian and long resident in Mandalay, qualified, therefore, to be a yahan himself, and from his previous experiences, one would think, not at all likely to countenance such open contempt of the provisions of the Wini, which treatise his success in the above-mentioned "theological tripos" implies that he knows by heart. But "Mr. Grandfather Oil" is very emphatically in the world of kāma; he is far from having beaten down the passions, and his place is the most startlingly secular of them all. He has got the kyaung of a myizzi mati, a pôngyi who has been ten Lents in the Order, and

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Mon)AP1
Burmese AP4

Ba Be 116

First in the list of personal spirits may be considered the kosaung nats, a kind of confusion of ideas between the proper spirit and the butterfly spirit, and representing as it were the genius of each individual, a kind of materialised conscience. They are twelve in number, six good and six bad, six male and six female, and regulate the life and doings of their *protégé* accordingly as the benevolent or the malevolent gain the upper hand.

Ba Be 776 342 782

Next to these comes the eing saung nat, very often called Min-magayi, the guardian nat of the house. For his comfort the tops of all the posts in the house are covered with a hood of white cotton cloth, for it is in this situation that he usually takes up his abode. In almost every house, at the end of the verandah in front, you will find a water-pot full of pareityé, water over which certain gathas, magic spells, or religious formulæ have been uttered by the astrologer, or the prior of the district. This water, which is replenished once a month, or oftener in cases of danger from disease, or when a member of the family is absent on a journey, is every now and then sprinkled about the house as a protection against bilus and spectres, ogres and tasés. When the water is consecrated in this nyaungye-o, which is of a special shape, something like an overgrown Indian spittoon, there are always a few twigs and leaves of the thabyé tree floating on the top. These are mostly taken out and hung round about the eaves, but occasionally left in the water. The inordinately superstitious sometimes keep a small thabyé bin (the sacred eugenia) growing in a pot in the house, so that its benign influence may keep harm away. Talaing houses may usually be known by the cocoa-nut hanging up at the south side of the building. This is covered with strips and tags of yellow or red cloth, and is offered to Min-magayi, whom they call the king of the nats. Of these spirits (called kaluk in their language) they say there are thirty-seven distinct varieties, but Min-magayi rules them all. These are the "thirty-seven nats of Burma," but whether they were borrowed by the Burmese from the Talaings or not seems at any rate doubtful. At the beginning of the wet season they always wrap up the cocoa-nut afresh, and when the rains are over make new offerings of money, glutinous rice, eggs, jaggari, and fruit, in order that the eing saung nat may

Ba Be 776 563 782

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Mon)AP1
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keep away fever from the household. It must not be supposed that the nat guardian of the house has necessarily any affection for those who have built the place where he has taken up his abode. He probably regards them only with cold indifference, however generous they may be in their offerings, and were he not propitiated by these gifts he would almost certainly display his anger by doing the inhabitants some grievous injury. But then he dislikes his haunts being intruded upon, and if a stranger comes at an unwonted time—a burglar at midnight, for example—it is quite likely that the eing saung nat will attack him violently, scare him out of his wits, or give him the colic. Thus without any really estimable purpose in his mind, Min-magayi may be a considerable protection to his worshippers, just as an "awful example" is useful to teetotallers.

Beyond this guardian, or demon of the house, there is the guardian nat of the village, the ywa saung nat, of whose shrine at the end of the town I have already made mention. None of the lower-class Talaings would ever think of eating a morsel without first holding up his platter in the air, and breathing a prayer to the village nat. They are particularly fond of putting up shrines to the nats under the le'pan tree, from the wood of which coffins are frequently made. A feast must be held every three or four years in honour of this nat, at which the natkadaw, a woman called the nat's wife, dances. This is done in order that sickness may be kept away. Should an epidemic actually break out, a very elaborate ceremony is gone through. Probably first of all the figure of a spectre, or of a bilu, is painted on an ordinary earthenware water-pot, and this is solemnly smashed to pieces about sundown, with a heavy stick or a dah. As soon as it gets dark, the entire populace break out into yells, and make as much noise generally as they can compass, with the view of scaring away the evil spirit who has brought the disease. This is repeated on three several nights, and if it is not then effective the yahans are called in to give their assistance. The prior, with his following, repeat the Ten Precepts, chant the Payeit-gyi, and then one of the sermons of the Lord Buddha is declaimed, the same by the preaching of which he drove away the pestilence

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

footpaths, and with a huge green cheroot in his mouth, leisurely contemplates the operation. Everything is now in the hands of nature, and the agriculturist may lounge round his farm in peace till November; unless, indeed, excessive rain floods the ground and rots the crop, when a new planting out has to be gone through. The harvesting near Rangoon is entirely done by men from Upper Burma, or even by Indian coolies. They work for very little, and it saves the farmer a good deal of time and dignity to get all the cutting done for him. Accordingly, from October till December the steamers down the Irrawaddy used to be crowded with King Thibaw's subjects, all of whom had to leave behind them with their Myo-sa, or his delegate the Myo-wun, who vicariously "ate" the township between them, a pledge either of property or of some member of their family, that they would return to their country again. When they got back, very little of their hard-earned gains escaped the voracity of the royal officials. Now they come down by train, and after a trip or two learn enough to keep their money from enterprising fellow-countrymen. These anyathas, as they are called, behave remarkably well in British territory, notwithstanding the assertions of the rural police, who, being unable to detect dacoits, declare that these are all Upper Burmans who have come down for the harvest. They are really, however, mostly simple, quiet people, who are kept very much in awe by the bluster and town-knowledge of the down-country farmers, and work away zealously with their queer sickles, looking like the ordinary English article worn to half its original size by long use. It is worthy of notice that the grain is not mown close to the ground as in Europe. Except where there is a market for straw, very little more than the ears are cut off, and the straw burnt in the hot weather of March and April supplies a scarcely-needed fertilising to the soil. The reapers usually receive their payment from the farmer in grain, but they naturally convert this into money, or more portable goods, before they start off home again.

It does not take long to cut the crop, and then the corn is brought in to the homestead, commonly on rude sledges, more seldom in carts. The threshing-floor does not take

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Hill Peoples Europeans) AP1
Burmese AP4

Be 241 313 [175] Ba 563 241 439

where some sturdy tree refuses to fall, and the clearing it away becomes a matter of very considerable danger. This taung-ya system is very wasteful as well as laborious, and annually draws down upon itself the denunciations of the English forest officers. But the hill-tribes who adopt it are too few to support themselves in any other way. They were long ago driven out of the plains by the Burmans, and now cling to their old nomadic life with a degree of obstinacy which Government officials, in a variety of ways, have found is not to be tempted by any tale of the present security and plenty of the low country, or even of the valleys among the hills. Rice, therefore, continues to be produced with the minimum and the maximum of labour; but none of the hill rice ever finds its way out of the country, and seldom even down to the plains.

Be Ba 243 438 563

The rice season, as far as the English merchant is concerned, commences in January and ends about May; but though this is pre-eminently the "busy season," there are purchases made in greater or less quantities all the year round. The relations between the great English rice firms and the simple jungle cultivators have not always been of a very elevating character, and it can hardly be denied that the fault lies wholly at the door of the foreigner. Missionaries in Burma are wont to mourn that their teachings are often rendered wholly nugatory by the want of scruple, and it might almost be said of honour, displayed by the great Rangoon rice firms. The good padres teach their proselytes that Christians are all honest and truthful. The ingenuous lads enter as clerks in a rice-mill and discover that Englishmen scarcely differ from the "poor heathen," except in being more lordly in the way of doing the thing.

Be Ba 243 442 563 175

Years ago, when there were not nearly so many mills as there are now, and not a quarter so many ships in the harbour during the rice season, things went on pretty equably. One day one firm would give a rupee or so more per hundred baskets, and the next day it would be another. But soon the mills began to increase in number and more ships came, and it was harder to get paddy. Then rival firms began to bid against each other. There was demurrage before their eyes, and it was terribly expensive work keeping the mill

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans - Indians) AP1
Burmese AP4

Be Ba 443 442 563 175

establishment up to its full strength. And so prices rose and rose until they became absurdly high, and no one profited but the hawks that preyed on the simple Burmese cultivators. Then the English merchants held a meeting, and all pledged themselves not to give more than the current market rate for paddy. This seemed a fair enough agreement; but after a while it was found that the boats all gravitated towards one or two firms. A little investigation showed that this was due to the fact that though they paid the ordinary rate, according to the compact, they had a smaller measuring basket than their neighbours. Accordingly every one went on reducing the size of his basket until the system became as ruinously absurd as ever it had been before. Then there was another meeting, at which it was unanimously agreed that this state of affairs would never do, and that it was absolutely necessary to come to some definite understanding. A committee was appointed which, after some deliberation, concluded that, if, in addition to abiding by the market rate, every one were bound to use a basket of a certain fixed size, there would be no chance for unfair speculations. A standard basket was therefore fixed upon; and the competitors were supposed to start fair again. But in no very long time, one firm put a false bottom in the basket, another wedged in a board; and so on, till matters got back to the old way. This state of affairs is hardly creditable to mercantile honour, and it certainly is by no means profitable.

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Independently of this, paddy has gone up in price at an alarming rate of late years. The first heavy rise was in 1877, at the time of the Madras famine. That was also the time of the resolution to have a standard basket. Rice was wanted in any quantity for the famine districts, and millers gave an altogether fabulous price for grain. The game went on merrily, introduced the scandalous "paddy morality," and lasted long enough to make the cultivators think the new prices had come in for good. Far too many Burmese farmers are heavily in debt to the "chetties," the money-lending caste of the Madras coast. The agriculturists have borrowed money to build a pagoda or a monastery; to give a grand feast on the

Be Ba 241 452 563 511

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma(Indians)AP1
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occasion of their marriage, or their father's death; to buy a new yoke of oxen in the place of those that have been carried off by disease; to get seed-grain to sow their tracts of paddy land, the last season's gains having been lost in some gambling transaction when they were down in Rangoon. They have got into the chetty's books in some way at any rate; and hapless is the man, Burman or Englishman, who has dealings with the fat, shaven-headed Madras money-lender. He will be charged eight, ten, twelve per cent a month, or even more, before there is an end of the transaction. The chetties, therefore, took a particular interest in the rise of the price of paddy. High prices ensured their being paid; moreover, handling such unwonted sums of money made the ever-careless Burman reckless. He gambled, he gave great feasts, he got deeper and deeper into debt with the money-lenders. Consequently it was desirable that the prices should not go down; and as men of business the chetties understood how that was to be done; they made the Burman farmers hold back their grain. The Rangoon firms were in desperation to meet their contracts, the ships could not be kept waiting; and so prices were maintained at nearly famine rates. This more than anything else brought about the unlucky legerdemain with standard baskets. The appearance of the chetty element in the trade upset everything. They are charming men of business, and know all about bulling and bearing, and all the other civilised expedients of trade. Poor "Jack Burma," listless and good-natured as he is, would never have thought of such things of himself; but he is in the hands of his master. Not a single village in the jungle, however remote, is to be found without its bare-backed money-lender. He hovers round the paddy nursery; he watches the men planting out the handfuls of half-grown rice; he makes the farmer hold back the threshed-out grain till he gives the word: then he fixes the rate and all but takes the money himself.

The English merchants have struggled against the system, but with small success. They have laid out heavy sums in advances. The farmer is paid for the next year's crop before ever it is sown. This is generally only practi-

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans) (Indians) AP1
Burmese AP4

Be 243 452 435 do no harm in Rangoon rice dealings, and would win that respect from the farmer which heavy payments and cunning never will.

Be 243 439 178 256 Rangoon still continues to be the largest rice port in the world. From January to May the river is crowded with shipping—huge iron and steel sailing craft that have been chartered beforehand, and carry off thousands of bags in their capacious holds; and a constant succession of "ditchers," as the steamers passing through the Suez Canal are called, which come "seeking," and seldom have to go away without their full complement of "five parts cargo rice," or "Europe milled." The steamers are displacing the sailing ships, and the shorter passage now makes it possible to carry fully husked rice home without the danger of heating, which was supposed to be avoided by the partly husked "five parts cargo rice." Harbour-masters and river-pilots have a busy time, and gather together many pieces of silver against the later months of the year, when they will have abundant leisure to spend them. Coringi coolies swarm in the town, and their monotonous chant, "Eh-ya-mah-la Tah-ma-lay, Madras Ag-boat Tah-ma-lay," may be heard at any hour of the night or the morning, floating over the river. The British sailor overflows into the town and sings noisy old salt sea-songs round about the Sule pagoda, gets mad drunk on arrack, and not unseldom clears Dalhousie Street with a linked-arm rush, heedless of the red-turbaned guardian of the peace, who keeps out of the way in the meantime, but will break poor drunken Jack's head with his truncheon if he finds him helpless and strayed from his fellow-roysterers.

Be 361 256 463 563 The Puzundaung Creek, where all the mills are, is as busy as an ant-hill all day long, and all night too, when some of the mills are lighted up with Jablochkoffs or later forms of electric light, and the silvery rays shine ghastly on the black and bronzed mill-workers. Here we have the Madrasi coolies again, making noises, according to their nature, as a kind of assertion that they are doing hard work. The lank Chittagonian firemen, with their aquiline noses, are coated with coal-dust, and divide their time between firing up and having a whiff at the hubble-bubble when Sandy,

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans Chinese) AP1
Burmese AP4

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the Scotch engineer, is not looking. There is a cluster of Chinese carpenters, chipping away with their queer thick-headed axes and planes, which, with characteristic perversity, they pull towards them, instead of pushing away as other workmen do. Here is M——, the English "assistant" at the mill, his hat and coat all covered with rice-dust, which hangs in queer fashion on his eyebrows and moustache. He is in high spirits. "We've got twenty-four pair of stones going to-day, more than anybody else in the creek;" and he goes off to see how the Burmese girls are stitching up the rice-bags, a duty of which he is particularly fond, and over which he spends a quite unnecessary amount of time. There is R——'s voice on the other side of the creek. He is storming at some men in the cargo-boat, who have done something wrong—anchored in the wrong place, or not started for the upper mill at Kemendine last night as they ought to have done. R—— has a voice which is the terror of every loitering coolie and dawdling boat-wallah in his employ; and he will be as hoarse as a North Sea pilot by nightfall, and will want a "double-barrelled" whisky and soda to moisten him before dinner. He wants company down to "the Point," and presently comes skimming across in his gig, manned by Chittagonian Kalassies, and we drop down the creek—they call small rivers creeks in the East—to where it joins with the main Rangoon stream. The Pegu river, tapping the country north-east and north of Rangoon, comes in at the same place; and there is a great crowd of paddy-boats here in the early morning. Each firm has its brokers, middlemen who make the purchases from the farmers that come down with their grain. They have been here since daylight, and fly about in their little dug-outs from one seller to another. The great point in a broker seems to be power of lungs and fluency in abuse. The amount of yelling that goes on at "Monkey Point" would silence the bookmakers' ring at Epsom on a Derby day.

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R—— has not come down to this pandemonium for nothing. There are a couple of big ships in, which must be filled, or there will be demurrage to pay, and a "canal-wallah" is expected this afternoon or to-morrow morning; so that the wheels must be kept going their hardest.

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER XXVI

SILK-GROWING

REARING silkworms, though a very profitable occupation, is not looked upon with any favour in Burma. To get the silk the pupa must be killed; and the taking of life in any form is an impiety always looked upon with great horror by all good Buddhists. Silk-growers are classed together with professional hunters and fishermen. The Four States of Punishment yawn for them, and their portion will be in the lowest abyss of the lowest hell. Still there are colonies of silk-growers in various parts of the country; but they live apart from the rest of the inhabitants as a rule, and often have entire villages to themselves. Colonel Horace Browne who, more than any other Englishman took an interest in the ways and occupations of the districts under his charge, states that the cultivators near Prome, where more silk is produced than in any part of Burma, are nearly all Yabeins —a race of the same stock as the Burmese, but despised by them independently of their crime in the way of habitually taking animal life. So much has the cultivation of silk become identified with them, that to Burman ears the term Yabein is virtually synonymous with that of silk-grower. They usually live on the hillsides, occupying themselves like the poorer Burmans and Karens, with taung-ya cultivation; burning the forests on the slopes and sowing the ground thus enriched with the wood ashes, with rice, cotton, or oil-seed. The system is viewed with very little approval by the government officials, for the taung-ya soil, hardly exhausted by the single crop raised off it, immediately produces a dense shrub-growth of no use to anybody, certainly not to the foresters.

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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536 who cannot stay over the night, or when a local feast, limited in its time, occurs. The great and legitimate season is the night, and frequently a play, especially a puppet play, extends over six or seven successive nights. The majority of the audience stay the whole time, from seven or eight o'clock at night till sunrise. It is not, however, to be supposed that they hear it all through. Abundance of mats and rugs are brought, and not a few, after listening till midnight or thereabouts, calmly curl themselves up to sleep, and slumber away for two or three hours, heedless of the braying of the horns and the crash of the cymbals only a few yards off. Then they wake up and fall in with the progress of the piece with as keen interest as if they had
263 heard every word of it. Most of the young people, however, prime themselves with the anti-soporific le'hpet, "pickled tea," as the English call it, and bid defiance to drowsiness. This condiment is as regular a crown to a Burmese dinner as cheese is to an English one, and with the same idea, possibly erroneous in both cases, that it promotes digestion.
● [563] [438] It is almost exclusively produced in Taungbaing, in the Shan country, by a hill tribe called Rumai, better known by the Burmese name of Palaungs. The Burmese mix with it salt, garlic, and assafœtida, douse it in oil, and add a few grains of millet seed. The leaves forming the basis are the leaves of an actual tree, as distinguished from the bushes of China and Assam. Hooker called it *Elæodendron orientale*, while Anderson asserted that it was really *E. persicum*. Of late years Assam planters have bought Taungbaing seed for their gardens. One of the grievances which Englishmen have when they attend a pwè is that they are always induced by their host to take pickled tea, and perceive in it nothing but the overpowering horrors of the assafœtida. Pwès and assafœtida are therefore associated with one another to the detriment of both.

533 Few foreigners can detect one tune from another, or the recitative from any one of them. Consequently most declare there is only one tune, or no tune at all, according to the capacity of generosity in them. The same thing has been said by an inappreciative Burman of the "vipers" of the Royal Scots Fusiliers. He admired the conscientiousness

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564 767 coffin or digging the grave. This occupation has therefore fallen almost exclusively into the hands of the old para-kyun, and helps to keep alive the ancient feeling. It must be allowed that the ways of the sandalās do not in any way tend to conciliate the multitude.

564 681 625 Finally there were the pagwet, the letyataung, or thaing-gyaing, the constables, jailers, executioners, lictors, mostly confined to the neighbourhood of the native kingdom Mandalay. These merited all the obloquy that could be cast on them, but their position of quasi-authority made them more secretly hated than openly flouted. They were never allowed to enter a free man's house, even in the exercise of their office; nor could they go within the walls of the palace stockade, but many a citizen smarted under the blows of the lictor's thaing, when a great man came round a corner suddenly, and the letyataung saw a chance for a back-hander with his fasces; and it was far too easy a matter for a man to get into jail in Mandalay to make it a wise proceeding to rail at the pagwet. It was an unlovely custom in Upper Burma which made the executioner both constable and jailer, and condemned him to live on his wits. The natural result was that he lived on the prisoners, and extorted the last pice out of his victim with threats of violence, or actual torture. Pagwet means a circle on the cheek, and this ring on the face implied that its bearer had been condemned for a capital crime, and was respited to become executioner. Others had devices descriptive of their offence tattooed on the chest, as luthat (murderer), thukho (thief), damya (dacoit or highway robber). An execution in Mandalay was a horrid sight. The "spotted man" danced round his victim, made feints with his sword and burst into fits of wild laughter or yells, to shake the doomed man's nerves. It must be admitted that the spectators were very little better. A skilful blow which just slit the skin and drew blood met with an approving shout. The pagwet, like other outcasts, was buried like carrion when he died, or perhaps was simply thrown out with the town offal.

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● 563 775 How does all this agree with the theory of Buddhism, that there is equality for all, and that the poorest man can raise himself to sublimest heights after death? The king

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had and exercised the power of life and death over all his people. He ruled in the truest sense by divine right, and his subjects were all his slaves. The answer is—it is kan, it is the accumulation of merits or demerits in past existences. A man is rich, powerful, and great, because aforetime he was pious and good. Therefore now he has a right to govern and look down with contempt on the poor. The poor man must have been a bad man before he entered on this existence. He deserves to be miserable; he knows it himself, and submits fatuously. It is true the tyrant does not do well if he oppresses him, and perhaps may be punished for it in a later existence, and become the slave of him who, now a slave, may hereafter by good works attain the rank of king. But in his present existence the great man has the fullest right to oppress and grind down the poor as much as he chooses. He enjoys the fruits of previous virtues, and since he has perhaps in many existences mortified the flesh and done grievous penance, he has now a right to enjoy himself to the limit of his desires. Moreover, as he has great power and riches, it is always easy for him by much almsgiving and good works to add so much merit to his kan as to outweigh all his sins, and in the end preserve the balance still in his favour. This is, however, very hard for the poor man. His station exposes him to many temptations to sin. He has but very little to give to the beikku and to the pagodas. He has perhaps even, in order to save himself from starvation, to shoot deer and game, and catch fish, a mode of living which infallibly dooms him to a few millions of years in hell, whence again he has to work up through the upper three states of punishment before he can enter anew upon existence on earth, there to strive to accumulate hard-earned merit, that he may not incontinently topple back again to nga-yè. In any case the poor man's hope can only be directed to the future. From the seeds sown in past worlds, tares have sprung up in the soil of his present existence, and tares they will remain. The germ of a higher life may be sown, but it will only grow up in a new existence. There is happily one refuge for the man born to poverty and misery. It is always open to him to put on the yellow robe of the Assembly of the Perfect, but to do that

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563 775 he must feel himself strong enough to beat down the fire of passions and remain steadfast to the end, for a lutwet, a man who has put his hand to the plough and turns back again, exposes himself to infinitely greater danger towards his next existence than he who has remained throughout in the world. The monastery is a house of refuge not to be lightly sought, and, sad to say, even it is not open to the outcast.

775 181 761 This doctrine of kan also accounts for the equanimity and callousness with which Buddhists view human misery and the taking of human life, notwithstanding the law which forbids the killing of even the smallest insect. They recognise apathetically the working out of inexorable destiny, and watch a man drowning in the river with undisturbed tranquillity, for they are not called upon or even justified in stirring a hand to prevent it. You cannot combat manifest fate.

564 But the outcast may not in any case enter the monastery, not even as a scholar. Even that last chance is withheld from him. He is the connecting link with the state of animals, the highest state of punishment. He is considered no better than an animal in thought; he meets with less toleration in actual life. Were he bedizened to the eyes with costly silks and priceless jewellery no girl would look at him. His wealth is of no use. He is not allowed to build a pagoda, or even to supply fresh-water pots on a wayside stand. The monk would refuse his alms; the starving free-man beggar would scorn his bounty. They will no doubt gradually disappear under British rule, but there will be those who will regret it. They may have to work hard for their living.

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Myowun wrote to him to say that as the envoy would not take his advice he must break off all intercourse, and the English thanthaman would be good enough not to come near his house for the future. Captain Cox had had a fence put up round his house to keep away the inquisitive rabble, at a cost of twenty rupees. One morning when he woke up he found this had been unceremoniously carried away, and that it had been used to enclose a place near the river where the heir-apparent's head might be washed. Finally great pressure was put upon him to take the oath of allegiance to the king; he was to drink the water in which the muskets and lances of the guard had been dipped, and it was expressly stipulated that he should pay for his oath just as any Burman would have to do. Scores of like details might be mentioned with regard to all the other ambassadors and residents. It will be sufficient, however, to mention that, in later years, one resident had a cane flourished over his head by a convict lictor, and that the last *chargé d'affaires* of all was chased by a howling rabble from the Mandalay bazaar to the Residency gates, which were broken in—no great exertion of strength was necessary certainly—all because he had killed a pariah dog that was snapping at his heels.

If the various Government representatives were treated in this way, non-official Englishmen could not expect great reverence to be paid to them, and it is hardly worth mentioning that in 1881 a Rangoon merchant, yelled at by convict lictors, went down on his knees while one of the leading spirits of the massacres, the Hpaung Wun, went by on his elephant. Little wonder then that the patriotic fictions of the Mahā Yazawin were believed, and that the perusal of them was all the more greedily indulged in. The wearing of shoes in the Palace was never settled till there had ceased to be a Lord of it.

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But it is not so much the English that suffered—though occasionally a few of them did get stoned—as the smaller nations and tribes who live around and among the Burmese. It must be acknowledged that the Burman is a sad bully; but the white strangers could reduce him to civility, if to nothing else, very speedily. It is different with other races—some perhaps aboriginal, some invaders of Burma as much

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as the Burmese themselves. The Chins, the Karens, and, in some degree, even the stalwart if simple Shans, have all suffered in common with weaker nationalities from the cunning and braggadocio of the Burman. The Mahā Yaza-win delights no less in recounting tales of barbaric diplomacy than in heroics about gallant generals who hold quicksilver in their mouths and advance on the quailing foe, leaping eighteen or twenty cubits in the air. For example, the chronicles of Prome relate the well-known world-story of the bullock's hide of ground. A tribe came from the East under the command of an Amazon. She obtained from the aborigines—probably now some of the hill-tribes in Arakan—a grant of as much land as could be enclosed within an ox-hide, and, following the example of Dido, cut the hide into strips. She got into difficulties, however, and would probably have been driven out had she not married a neighbouring king. A stepson of hers founded the ancient town of Tharekettara (Prome), an event said to have been prophesied by the Buddha Gautama himself, in proof whereof the Shwesandaw pagoda exists to the present day.

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A story of a similar character is told with regard to the Shans. The Burmans had a quarrel with some of these big-boned highlandmen as to the ownership of a tract of fine paddy-land. The Shans were in force, and perfectly prepared to fight about the matter. The Burmese therefore resorted to craft. An old hermit was referred to on the subject. He said that the party which first finished building a pagoda of a certain fixed size should have the disputed territory. So both sides set to work. The Burmese soon found that the sturdy hillmen were distancing them. At night, therefore, the chief had recourse to stratagem. He made a framework of bamboos of the required height, had it covered with cloth, and daubed the cloth with white plaster. When daylight came, and the Shans saw the Burmese shrine complete and perfect, even to the extent of offerings of fruit and candles, their astonishment and dismay were such that they marched off straightway to the hills—ascribing the rapid erection to supernatural assistance, and never dreaming of examining the precocious payā; whereat the Burmese chronicler chuckles with patriotic delight, and glorifies the

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shrewdness of his countrymen. The same story is told of the foundation of the Arakan empire by the younger of two brothers who came from India.

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But it is in the relations with the milder-natured tribes, such as the Karens and Chins, or the small if warlike septs such as the Kachins, that the Burman most comes up to the truculence of the Mahā Yazawin. Out of the northern Kachins—bold robber bands, armed with queer, home-made, stockless guns—little was to be gained. They lived on the hills, and owned nothing but pigs; but they raided on low-land villages, and the Burmans retaliated, and there were periodic seasons of mutual crucifixion. Long ago these clans had the reputation of kindly hospitality, but Burmese tyranny made most of them dangerous savages. It is different with the Karens and Chins. The former, a heavy, plethoric people, endure their wrongs with dull indifference, all but the fierce Red Karens, who kept up a perpetual guerilla warfare, after the manner of the Kachins. The Karens account for their wrongs in the following way. When Yŭwa created the world he took three handfuls of earth and threw them round about him. From one sprang the Burmans, from another the Karens, and from the third the Kalās, the foreigners. The Karens were very talkative and made more noise than all the others, and so the Creator believed that there were too many of them, and he threw another half handful to the Burmans, who thus gained such a supremacy that they soon overcame the Karens, and have oppressed them ever since.

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The Chins were subjected to such long-continued and systematic ill-treatment on the part of the Burmese, that traditions accounting for this oppression actually form a part of the national religion. All mankind, they say, is descended from a woman called Hlinyu, who laid 101 eggs, from the last laid of which sprang the Chins. Hlinyu loved the youngest best; but he had gone away, and before she found him again the whole world except bleak mountain-ranges had been partitioned out among her other children. So the Chin first man got the hills, and as compensation was given elephants, horses, cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls. Unfortunately, Hlinyu appointed the Burman brother to

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look after him. The Burman turned out a most wicked and unscrupulous guardian. He pretended to teach him, but only showed the blank side of the slate, so that the poor Chin never learned a single letter. He rubbed the elephant's back with cowhage, so that the Chin's bare legs were so tickled that he refused to have such an unpleasant animal, and gave all the elephants to the Burman. By similar tricks the buffaloes, the horses, and the cattle were obtained. When the Chin mounted to ride on the horse, the Burman's wife got in the way, and was knocked down; and as compensation for the injuries she sustained, and to quiet her clamour, the horse had to be handed over. Then at the Burman's instigation the Chin went to view his buffaloes, clad in fiery-red garments. The buffalo naturally chased him up a tree, and before he could gain the earth again the buffaloes had gone the way of the elephants and horses. Ultimately nothing remained but goats, pigs, and fowls. Even the barren mountains were not left in his undisturbed possession. When the boundaries of the different countries were marked out, the Burman took very good care to mark his with stones and pillars, but he persuaded the Chin that tufts of grass were good enough for him. These were all burned away by the jungle-fires, and then the despoiled Chin had to live wherever the Burman told him. Thus the race has never had a country or town of its own, but wanders about in a nomadic way over the hills on the fringe of Burma. The well-known custom some of the frontier Chin women have of tattooing their faces is an existing proof of this tyranny. They are naturally pretty; and this disfigurement—for they themselves acknowledge it to be such, and never adopted it in the heart of the Chin hills—was adopted to prevent the Burmese from carrying them off, as they once did constantly.

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The stories of the Mahā Yazawin fully account for and justify these queer traditions of the national religion of the Chins. But it is not in such minor points that the annalist is seen at his best. It is when he vapours about Chinese and Siamese and Munipuris, who come in armies numbered by hundreds of thousands, with elephants in tens of thousands, and the guardian nats of the nations fight on their respective

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handsomest Burman in the country, people used to say. Two years and a half have, however, made a very great difference. His majesty's flat nose has become flatter than ever; his forehead seems to have more of the snake's slope back than even the most typical of his family; and his round face is all bloated and blotched. When we had an interview with him, he had a scratch across his face from the eye over the left cheek, and it was a question whether the queen had done it or not. It did not add dignity to a manner which was not by any means ideally kingly. It was a private interview certainly, and we did not therefore expect to see him gorgeous in a silk surcoat and spire-like tharapu or crown. But it seemed somewhat negligent to appear in a soiled white short coat and a plain check pattern, yellow silk pasoh, such as any ordinary townsman might wear. In his ears certainly were splendid gold cylinders, with magnificent clusters of diamonds and emeralds at the ends, and on his finger glistened a sapphire ring worth a monarch's ransom. There was a spray of diamonds in his hair too, but it only sufficed to draw attention to the fact that he had neglected his toilet, which is a bad sign in a young man! All Burmans wear their long hair tied up in a knot on the top of their head. Thibaw, however, stepped out of a monastery on to the throne, and in the monasteries every one has his head shaved. The royal hair has therefore not had time to grow very long yet, and his majesty makes up his yaung, or top knot, with false tresses, as many humbler Burmans do, only they take care over it, which he does not. This is the worst sign of all; for when a Burman ceases to take pride in his hair he must be very far gone.

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There are very considerable doubts as to his majesty's legitimacy. In any case he is not a pure Burman. His mother had a good deal of wild Shan blood in her veins. Just before Thibaw's birth it was discovered that his mother was unpardonably intimate with a pôngyi, one of the mendicants of the royal monastery. The monk was thrown into prison, and died there very suddenly of official colic. The queen was sent to a nunnery, where she remained till Thibaw came to the throne. She had better have stayed there for good. A year ago there was a fearful scandal.

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701 between the inner and outer stockades of the palace. There they fell in, in a theoretical formation of fours, and remained placidly waiting; conversation went on freely, and smoking and chewing betel were not interfered with. The bogyi and other officers of rank meanwhile assembled within the inner court. After, perhaps, three or four hours' waiting, the king came out and inspected the forces through a field-glass from the head of the broad flight of steps in front of the Hall of Audience, or, perhaps, a notice was sent out that his majesty would not even view his troops in this easy fashion, and the army was saved from the—to English notions—exceedingly unmilitary attitude of grovelling on its stomach for a matter of two minutes while the king looked through his binocular.

701 714 This over, the non-commissioned officers said *hé!* and the men sloped arms and started off anyhow. Outside the eastern gate a halt was made while the bogyis, colonels of regiments, mounted their elephants, got into position, and marshalled their bodyguards round about them. The lesser bos and thwethaukgyis, "great blood drinkers," were mounted on ponies and had their personal retainers about them too. The commanding officer came at the head of his regiment, preceded by twenty pages carrying double-barrelled smooth-bores in red cloth covers. These pages were all dressed alike, according to the individual taste of the commander, in uniform turbans, tunic, and pason. The livery of the [563] young Kachin colonel of the Fourth Regiment was the most effective—red-flowered turbans, French grey jackets, and red pasos of the wavy "dog's tooth" pattern. The colonel of the Third Regiment, on the other hand, revelled in bilious contrasts—pea-green gaungbaungs, flowing red tunics, and yellow waistcloths of what a 'Varsity tradesman would call a neat quiet plaid pattern. This bodyguard walked at either side of the road in loose Indian file to see that the way was clear. The bo himself rode an elephant, gorgeously caparisoned, with tassels and streamers trailing to the ground from the velvet-covered howdah. He was dressed in the national turban and paso, but wore a tight-fitting tunic, covered with gold lace. All of them were either smoking or chewing betel. Behind the elephant came

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had no drill, but this was very far from being the case. On the contrary, drill was going on constantly inside the palace and at the various guard stations. The French and Italian officers were always instructing them, but a want of belief in the utility of mass movements rendered all their efforts useless. The recruits went through the balance-step with the utmost enthusiasm; when it came to forming fours they were a little less ardent, but by the time they ought to have been counter-marching and right-forming company they were tired of the whole business and poked fun at the instructor. European officers called themselves, and were called, generals and colonels and what not, but they were simply drill sergeants with very unpromising material. They were allowed no uniform; they never took command on a review day. Occasionally they complained of being insulted by their squads, and were told by a sententious mingyi that patience is one of the ten virtues which go to the making up of a true gentleman. To recompense them for their trials they made a great deal of money in a variety of ways, their salaries being the least part, and paid at long and uncertain intervals in a lump sum. The real "generals" were men who hardly ever came out at all, least of all when there was a chance of fighting. The commander-in-chief was for many months in jail, but still retained his title, and two of his sons remained in command of regiments. The men who managed the reviews and any work that was to be done were all let-thôndaw, the king's pages of honour. Few of them were over twenty, but their duties did not require much experience.

Besides the legitimate drill, conducted by the European instructors, there were other performances, the object of which would hardly be apparent to the compilers of the *Manual of Field Exercise*. The instructor, one of the junior officers, assembled the men in a big circle round about him, and proceeded in a fashion dictated to him apparently by nothing but his own fancy. He threw his gun into the air, caught it and cried *hé!* and the men followed his example to the best of their ability. He went through the same manœuvre behind his back, cried *hé!* again, and the men probably got some hard knocks in dutifully trying to imitate him. He cried *hé* and hunched up his shoulders; cried *hé* and brought

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specially for the purpose, with mountains of bananas, and trays heaped up with ngapi, curries, and condiments of all kinds. Thibaw Min was not so eager for merit, and actually went the length of driving a couple of thousand of the holy men out of the capital. Still even he gave them periodical feasts, and there were at least ten thousand of the religious in the Golden City and its immediate neighbourhood. Besides these there were numerous other nationalities; the Chinaman, smooth-shaven and prosperous as always, whether gaunt and big-boned from Yün-nan and Szuch'uan, or sleek and sturdy from Rangoon and the Straits, defying the most greedy official to rob him of his profits, and drinking his tea and smoking his opium-pipe with supreme composure and good-humour; the bearded Surati with solemn face and Jewish tricks of trade; the Palaung come down from the north with his bamboo rafts laden with pickled tea; the stalwart Shan with baggy blue or white trousers and tattoo marks down to his ankles, journeying in a long caravan with sword-blades and iron-work, and a cavalcade of mountain ponies; the heavy, easy-going Karen; the lithe, treacherous Kachin, bringing presents perhaps from his village, and on his way down spying out villages easy to raid in a night attack; all these, and a host of others, might be seen any day in the Royal City of Gems. There were not a few white men too, even latterly, when evil times fell upon them, and there were not the pickings that were to be had when Mindôn Min was king. But many of them were there sorely against their inclination. Mandalay had become an asylum for insolvent debtors, runaway soldiers and sailors, and unlucky adventurers from British territory, just as Rangoon used to be for India in the old Burman days. There were numbers of French and Italians in government service, as military instructors and superintendents of the various factories; officers who had been cashiered, or disowned by their families, or were in other ways under a cloud. One Count there was, who constituted the scientific branch of the service in himself, manufactured and sold fruit syrups to the captains of steamers, preserved a pocket-handkerchief with a coronet in the corner, and carried his lands in his finger-nails. The old king was shamefully cheated by a variety of speculators, not a few of them Englishmen.

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Perhaps it was his own fault. He had a perfect monomania for making cannon, and thought that every white man must have some notion of how they were to be manufactured. Consequently, whenever some fresh wanderer came to the royal city and requested employment, he was brought before the king, and some such dialogue as the following ensued: "What is your name?" "John Smith." "What can you do?" "May it please your majesty, I am a sea-cook." "Can you make a cannon?" Whereupon John Smith, if he was a wise man, would profess his ability to make the attempt at any rate. A lump of metal would be made over to him, and he would chisel and hammer away at it and draw his monthly pay as regularly as he could get it. When results were demanded he would either run away, or boldly ask for a grant of money to enable him to go to Europe to get the requisite tools. If he got it neither tools nor man were ever seen again. Such lack of moral principle was believed by the king to arise from the want of a Buddhist training, and he continued to be imposed upon to the very end. Thibaw still retained some foreigners in his service, but they found it harder to get their pay, and much more of a task to swindle the Government.

Thus Mandalay presented a series of violent contrasts: jewel-studded temples and gilded monasteries standing side by side with wattled hovels penetrated by every wind that blew; the haughty prince preceded by the respited murderer, his lictor; the busy Chinaman next door to the gambling scum of the low country; the astrologer, learned in his mantras, overpersuaded by the glib talk of the Western adventurer; and over all hanging the fear of prison with its nameless horrors, and the knife of the assassin.

In the beginning of the century Rangoon was in much the same condition, except that it was very much smaller, no better in fact than a village with the Governor's house and stockade in the middle of it. Now it has broad smooth roads, beautifully laid out public gardens, abundant street lamps, spacious mercantile offices, mills, schools, jails, hospitals, clubs, and halls. The population forms an even more motley assemblage than is to be found in Mandalay.

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There are Chinese, Japanese, Malays, Siamese, natives of India of all parts, Bengalis, Madrassis, Panjabis, Parsis, Persians, Suratis, together with Armenians, Jews, English, French, Germans, Italians, Greeks, and all the European nationalities, mixed up with the native races, Burmese, Talaings, Shans, Karens, but they are all kept in order by the strong arm of the law, which is the same for the rich man and the poor.

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The same benefits are now extended to Mandalay, but it is a vastly less interesting place than it used to be. A siding from the railway cuts its way through the city wall; one of the pyathats on the battlements has thrown out corridors to make a somewhat barrack-like Government house; a carriage drive goes round Mandalay hill; the pigs have all been eaten up, and the pariah dogs are poisoned periodically by municipal order. There never were any sludgy sqwudgy creeks, but the roads, which were a passable imitation of them in the rains, are now eminently fitted for exceeding the speed limit. A, B, and C roads testify to the unromantic stolidity of the Military Intelligence Department; electric trams make it easier for the Burman to move to the suburbs and leave the town to the hustling foreigner. There are no agreeable scallywags. There are Cook's tourists instead during the three cool months of the year. The palace, instead of being tawdrily magnificent, smells horribly of bats. It has been declared to be an archæological treasure, though it is only about sixty years old, and has been horribly mishandled by unimaginative secretaries and a Public Works Department oppressed with sealed patterns.

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CHAPTER LX

THE LANGUAGE

193 194 THE Burmese language is monosyllabic, and is therefore, like all the other monosyllabic languages, forced into the tonic system on account of the limited number of combinations of which the consonants admit. The multitude of meanings which a slight difference of accentuation gives to an otherwise identical sound is the greatest difficulty which a stranger has to contend with in studying the language, and never fails to land the beginner in a most embarrassing maze of complications. The modulations of the voice which European nations employ only to express astonishment, disbelief, interrogation, and alarm, become in Burmese and other Indo-Chinese tongues a means for distinguishing between words of different meaning; and this peculiarity offers particular difficulties to the phlegmatic, monotonous-voiced Englishman. It does not simplify matters that Burmese is, of all these languages, the softest and most pliable, and has therefore received the title of the Italian of the Far East. The varying cadence of the sounds produces to the ear the semblance of a chant, and all the people seem to speak in a kind of rhythm, so that as long as a man has ideas, it is not [503] a very difficult matter to compose linga. But this only [195] renders it more puzzling to the Occidental, and accounts for the fact that very few Englishmen learn Burmese, and still fewer speak it well. Of the mercantile community not one in fifty has any knowledge of Burmese at all; and the civil officers, who have to pass examinations before they get 194 promotion, are but poor hands in conversation. The chief 876 reason of this is, of course, that the European is accustomed

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A woman who has seven sons or seven daughters in unbroken succession is almost certain to become a witch; her husband had better not quarrel with her at any rate.

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At Kāma, a small place between Prome and Thayetmyo, there is a spirit flame, a kind of Jack o' Lantern, in a hollow near the town. Long ago a smith was killed in a brawl and became a nat after death. He liked his old profession and set up a nat-fire, and worked away at nights on a spectral forge. The inhabitants soon found out what was going on, and after their first terror was over used to go out in the middle of the day and leave a piece of iron, saying, "Good Mr. Spirit, make me an axe, a dah, a hoe." Next day they found it all ready made. At last a Chin—just the sort of thing one of those stupid people would do—hid himself, and just when the midnight cocks had finished crowing, up rose the smith in human shape, dressed in a red paso and a flaring red turban. He began hammering away on his anvil, welding a sword. The infatuated Chin at last shouted, "Make it quick." The demon smith whipped round on the instant and flung the red-hot dah at him, burning his cheek. The indiscreet peeping Tom took to his heels and ran. After he had got a mile away he rubbed his blistered cheek, and in after-times there rose at that place Pāpôt, "the cheek-rubbing village." A mile farther on he began to shake all over with fatigue and terror, whence the name of Tôn, "the trembling village." Finally, when he reached the site of Paukpogu, the "swelling burst," he sank down on the ground, and was found there next morning with just enough life left to tell his story. The smith never worked again, but his fire may be seen to this day. Once a year all the house fires in Kāma are put out and lighted again from the nat-mi. Should any one neglect so to pay hônour to the nat, his house and all his goods will be burnt before the year is out. The resemblance to the legend of Wayland Smith at Lambourn in Berkshire is obvious. The naming of the villages is also a favourite form of Horne Took etymology prevalent all over Burma.

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The common notion of earthquakes is that the earth is supported on the shoulders of four creatures called nga-hlyin. These monsters are less sturdy than the classical Atlas, and

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
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243 led around in circular fashion until the grain is thoroughly separated from the stalks. A pronged hoe is then drawn over the stalks to further the separation, after which the bullocks further stamp upon them. When the grain appears to be full separated from the stalks it is swept up into large heaps, while the stalks are put aside for use as cattle fodder.

Winnowing apparatus consists of a tripod of bamboo poles, from the top of which is suspended a plaited round tray of wide weave. Basketsful of grain are handed up to a man who stands on a platform, often an old barrel or a chair, and empties them on to the tray. As he shakes the tray the grain falls through to the ground, while any chaff is carried away by the wind.

The paddy for household use may then be allowed to dry further before being sent by boat down Pazundaung Creek to be milled. In a few households the paddy for home consumption is husked by a foot-operated pounding device, or by a large, hand-operated mortar and pestle. If there is any surplus, beyond the requirements of home consumption, seed, payment of laborers and debts, it is sold to nearby millers who come to purchase it.

494 3. Bus Operation. Forty-four men of the community are principally occupied as bus drivers or fare-collectors. The latter are known as 'spares' in the local terminology. Because of the total destruction of public transportation facilities during World War II in Rangoon and the surrounding area, large numbers of surplus military vehicles have been converted into buses. These buses are owned individually or by small groups of partners. The Tadagale men who engage in bus operation ply between the village, which is a terminus, and Rangoon. Their vehicles are, for the most part, in poor repair, and breakdowns along the route are not uncommon. No regular time schedule is followed; rather, they begin a trip when fully loaded, which is to [436] say extremely tightly packed with passengers. By carrying maximum loads, and by charging a fare of 6 annas (ca. 8 cents), the bus operators are able to make a profit, despite the high cost of fuel (ca. 47 cents per Imperial gallon) and of repairs.

464 4. Field Labor. Thirty-eight villagers make their livings mainly by field labor. During the planting and harvesting seasons they work steadily for cultivators, either in Tadagale or in nearby communities. They are paid in kind or in cash, seldom in combination. During the growing season, August to November, and again, between the end of the harvest and the beginning of the planting season, these people must depend on other temporary jobs to round out their livings.

234 5. Dairy Farming. This occupation is carried on exclusively by the small
● 563 group of Indians in Tadagale, who possess herds of water buffalo and cattle.
443 Fresh milk is taken daily by bus, in large metal containers, to Rangoon, where it is sold for cash, mostly to Muslim restaurants. The Burmese inhabitants of Tadagale make but slight use of milk and there is virtually no market for it in the village.

265 6. Selling of Prepared Foods. The preparation and itinerant selling of certain Burmese foods supports twenty persons, of whom many are women. Because of the Burmese habit of informal, occasional eating between the two regular daily meals, food sellers do a considerable business. They are invariably present at the pwes, outdoor dramatic presentations staged during holidays and on other festive occasions.

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One of the most popular foods of these vendors is mohingha. Rice noodles are made by pounding rice into a flour, mixing it with water, and grinding into a paste between two flat stone slabs. After the excess water has been expressed from this paste, it is pushed through sieves with narrow holes, to form noodles. Once dried, the noodles are cooked and mixed with a curry to make mohingha. 252

A beverage sold regularly by food vendors is molesaun. It is made of sugar, coconut milk and bits of rice noodles, mixed together. The villagers consider this drink very tasty and refreshing. 272

7. Shopkeeping and Middleman Trading. The typical shop in the village consists of nothing more than a few large glass jars containing cigars, matches, candy, soap, and various other articles, set out on the porch in front of a house. The stocks of these are very small and are periodically replenished by purchase in Rangoon. Customers are occasional and sales are very small. 414

Seventeen villagers devote their main activity to what we have called middleman trading. These persons make a living by periodically buying quantities of such goods as second-hand lumber from dismantled dwellings, bamboo, cloth, etc., and selling them in the village and nearby places.

8. Urban Labor. The nineteen individuals listed in Table II as urban laborers are employed in a government medical warehouse in Rangoon. They are unskilled workers who perform such tasks as moving boxes of medical supplies in and out of the establishment and arranging them in the warehouse. These people commute daily between Tadagale and their place of work by bus. 464 369

These are the numerically most significant of the variety of occupations followed by villagers. There are six unemployed persons and fourteen who are not gainfully employed because of old age, ill health, or blindness. The great majority of the married women and unmarried girls are occupied most of the time with domestic housework, looking after small children, and helping with gardening. 463

The whole character of the occupational pattern is shifting and unstable. Individuals move opportunistically from one form of activity to another as circumstances change, in an effort to round out a living. Informants stated that in former times the community was much more agricultural, but that owing to loss of land through indebtedness people had gradually left farming for other occupations. 463 178

Income

In analyzing our data on income, figures for the Indians of Tadagale have been calculated separately. The Indians are occupationally a homogeneous group, all engaged in dairy farming. The range and average of income within this small group is so far above that of the Burmese that a misleading idea of the community's economic structure would be conveyed were the data on the Indians included in a single, overall computation for the village. 434 [563]

The following tables show family incomes.

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
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The mean annual family income of cultivators is Rs. 1091 ($229), and the mean annual per capita income is Rs. 203 ($42). For non-cultivators, the comparable figures are Rs. 1210 ($254) and Rs. 276 ($57). However, when we compare median family incomes (a more reliable measure of central tendency for our sample) the apparent advantage of non-cultivators disappears; they receive Rs. 900 as against Rs. 910 for cultivators. The only significant difference in the range of incomes for the two groups is that some 7% of the non-cultivators receive incomes over Rs. 3500 ($735), while no cultivator receives over Rs. 3000. However, the idea is prevalent in the village that cultivation is a relatively unprofitable occupation and that it is possible to realize as much or more income by less arduous types of work.

The Indians of Tadagale are much more prosperous in terms of income, as shown below.

Table V

Family Incomes of Indians
(in rupees. Rs 100 = $21)

Income	No. Families
0- 500	0
500-1000	3
1001-1500	1
1501-2000	2
2001-2500	2
2501-3000	3
Over 7000*	4
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(*includes two families of Rs. 7200 each; one of Rs. 8640; and one of Rs. 18,000.)

The mean annual family income for the Indians is Rs. 4030 ($848), and the mean annual per capita income is Rs. 1343 ($281).

Differences in family incomes are not reflected in external status symbols, except in extreme cases. In poor families the type of house is usually bamboo and thatch, while among relatively prosperous families it is more likely to be of plank construction, with perhaps a galvanized iron roof. In the wealthier families the women have more silk longyis for dress occasions. Major differences in economic standing are often shown in the size, elaborateness and expensiveness of ceremonials, such as weddings and boys' initiation ceremonies, and in the contributions made towards the support of the Buddhist monks.

In general, however, wealth differences in Tadagale do not seem to provide any clear basis for differential association of persons. Kinship, which cuts across economic lines, is far more important. Although a few families are generally regarded as well off, they do not live apart from the rest of the community either in the spatial or social sense. Wealth does not appear to have any direct correlation with status, rank or privilege, or to form the

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In Standard 1A, numerals up to one hundred and the various arithmetic operations are taught. Reading is done from a primer which contains fifteen commandments of the Buddha in Pali, with Burmese translations. In addition, a more advanced reader is used, containing sermons of the Buddha in both languages. The children in this class range in age from six to thirteen years, the average being nine.

The next class, Standard 2, provides further reading in the sermons and precepts of Buddhism, arithmetic ranging into high numbers, multiplication tables up to sixteen, and sums involving money. The geography of Burma is introduced. The pupils average ten and a half years.

More advanced arithmetic, reading of historical tales, and more advanced geography are included in the curriculum of Standard 3, the pupils of which average in age about the same as those in Standard 2. Hygiene is begun, literally called 'lessons to insure good health.' Besides cleanliness, the children learn proper postures for sitting, sleeping, and eating. Exercises in Burmese grammar are given by mass recitation -- which is the method of teaching all subjects. Another subject is the writing of letters and social invitations.

Children ranging from ten to fourteen years are in Standard 4. They use an advanced reader containing Buddhist sermons and history. Their arithmetic includes weights and measures, land measurement, and simple interest calculations. There is more emphasis on writing of letters and essays.

The school building is simply a vacant house. The entire school group is assembled at the same time, seated on the floor. The lessons of the different standards are recited one after another. While one standard is engaged in recitation, the other pupils are expected to study, or at least remain quiet. On the religious duty days, and of course on the holidays, the school is not in session.

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This school contributes to the literacy of the village, although in large measure the high literacy here and generally in Burma, as compared with India and China, is attributable to the monastic schools. In Tadagale, 357 of a total of 640 persons, eight years of age and above, on whom literacy data could be secured, were literate. This is 55%. The criterion of literacy employed was ability to read a newspaper in some language. Of the 331 men in this number, 251 were literate, or nearly 76%. Women, however, were only 31% literate. Literacy in English is rare in the village; there were but twelve persons who could read an English language newspaper, and of these, nine were men.

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Tadagale's proximity to Rangoon, where several newspapers are published, gives villagers access to the press. In fact, a few vendors of the metropolitan newspapers sell them in the community. Few persons buy these, but these copies receive very wide circulation. A survey of newspaper reading, carried out among those claiming literacy indicated a frequency range from zero to daily reading of newspapers. The largest group, nearly a third, both men and women, read a paper once or twice a week, while another 20% read one twice or three times a month. 10% reported never reading papers, while 16% claimed to be daily readers.

Intergroup Relations

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As indicated earlier, about 6% of the population of Tadagale consists of Indians, some of them born in Burma. The Indian inhabitants came to the village

563 463 184 [262] within the past two or three decades. In almost every way, they form a village within the village. They are spatially clustered together, apart from the Burmese. Their living is earned by dairying; milk from their cattle and water buffaloes is sold in Rangoon, for cash, to Muslim restaurants. Since the Burmese do not consume milk, the Indian dairymen find no market for their product in the community. The only economic relationship between the two groups consists of some exchange of Burmese paddy stalk, when the harvest is over, for animal manure. The Indians use the paddy stalk as fodder for their animals, while the Burmese use animal manure to some extent for their not very fertile garden and rice lands.

563 511 556 The Indians being Hindus, the Burmese Buddhists, the two groups have no basis for common participation in religious or ceremonial life. Nor is there more than a negligible tendency towards intermarriage; our census showed two cases.

As shown by our figures on income, the Indians as a group are far more prosperous than the Burmese. Although the Burmese seem to realize this, they tend to phrase the matter not so much in terms of greater wealth of the Indians as in terms of how little the Indian spends of his income. To the average Burmese of the village, the Indian is something of a lesser breed who lives on next to nothing and so grows rich.

563 Throughout the course of research in Tadagale, an effort was made from time to time to study intergroup feelings and attitudes, but this was a subject on which informants who were quite ready to discuss almost any other matter were loath to speak. The Burmese seemed to know little (or at least so professed) about the ways of the Indians; the Indians were very tight-lipped concerning the Burmese.

175 669 674 It was towards the close of our work in Tadagale that certain events occurred which brought out, in sharp focus, the nature of Burmese-Indian relations and attitudes, and completely broke the silence maintained earlier. At this point, however, some digression is necessary to provide a background for understanding what took place.

In 1949-50, the internal disturbances which have beset Burma since the end of World War II were at their height. During this time the maintenance of law and order sank to a very low point; robbery, armed and unarmed, was rampant. Tadagale was robbed three times within the preceding year, according to informants. On such occasions, bandits entered the village, fired their guns into the air to frighten the defenseless villagers, and then proceeded to tie up some villagers and remove their money and other valuables. Anyone who resisted was beaten. According to villagers, the police, located about half a mile away, could not be depended upon for protection or for action once a crime occurred, for the bandits were better organized and armed than the police, making the latter extremely reluctant to take any action.

674 563 175 Some early evidences of distrust between Indians and Burmese appeared about the middle of our research period, when an Indian dairyman stated that he was convinced that the bandits who periodically invaded Tadagale had Burmese collaborators in the village. He based his belief on the fact that the bandits seemed always to find their way directly to the homes of the more prosperous inhabitants, which knowledge, he claimed, could be gotten only from villagers.

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674 fund, which he had broached informally on past occasions, did not meet with enthusiasm, the headman suggested that the village be divided into territorial units, and that each unit be responsible for raising its own money for arms and for deciding on the custody of its weapons. He called for volunteers from the elders to take responsibility for soliciting funds from inhabitants of their respective areas.

The headman's speech was met with total silence for a time, followed by a great deal of whispered conversation among various small groups. At this point the eldest man in Tadagale, himself a retired headman and a relative of the present headman, exhorted, 'Speak out your thoughts. It is not good to keep things bottled up within yourselves.' The headman now told the group that as their representative he could do nothing unless they wished it.

As hushed conversations continued among the assembled villagers, the headman and elders proceeded to talk among themselves for several minutes. It was then and there decided that each household would be asked to contribute what it could afford; no fixed assessment would be levied. A household too poor to contribute to its unit fund would be expected to help in the event that an attack occurred. Since some elders objected to giving assistance to any unit which chose not to arm, or could not afford to, it was decided that armed groups would not come to their aid. Now another call for volunteers to raise funds was made by the headman, and several elders offered their services. The headman asked them to make every effort to persuade people to contribute.

623 If we may digress for a moment, this village meeting is instructive in showing how authority is exercised and decision making takes place in the community. The traditional emphasis upon the wisdom and authority of age is seen in the fact that only the elders spoke in the meeting, although the headman presumably called the meeting, in the first place, to mobilize village-wide support and tried to evoke expressions of opinion. An informant questioned later about the meeting said, 'It is not customary for the younger people to voice their opinions or take part in the discussion during a meeting. The elders do that.' The idea of a free give-and-take discussion is almost totally foreign to these peasants, who live but a few miles from Rangoon, a center of diffusion for western concepts and practices.

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● 573 To return to the bearing of the above described meeting on Indian-Burmese relations in the village. During the meeting the question arose whether the Indians would be asked to contribute to the fund for purchasing arms, to which the headman answered in the affirmative. At that point one man quipped, 'Of course they must contribute; they have thousands of rupees.' [The meeting was not concerned with defending the village against bandits.—Analyst]

Two spokesmen for the Indians were present. The village headman explained to them that those who lived towards the northern end of the village would be included in a nearby unit for defense purposes, while the others could contribute their money directly to him. Then, half in jest, he said that each Indian household should give the cost of one gun. Somewhat irritated, one of the Indian spokesmen said that if need be he was willing to pay for five guns, but the question he wanted answered was who would have custody of the weapons. The headman was extremely hesitant to answer, and the Indians left the meeting without a definite answer.

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 APl Burma
Burmese AP4
Indians

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So matters rested for about two weeks. On March 7th the Indian quarter of the village was suddenly the scene of intense activity. Houses and barns were being dismantled and ox carts and motor trucks were being loaded with animal fodder and dismantled buildings. The normally quiet Indian community was a beehive of activity. Quite without warning, the Indians were leaving Tadagale en masse. Eagerly we sought out Indian informants to determine what had happened.

An Indian woman tearfully related her version of events:

> The Burmese want the Indians of the village to pay 1,150 rupees for guns to defend the community. How can we afford that amount? Our money has all been spent buying hay. Besides, we Indians are not wanted in this village. We have been abused and threatened; men have walked into my house carrying sticks and pieces of iron and have kicked the dogs. We can't afford to move; it costs 20 rupees to have a house dismantled, 30 rupees to have it transported, and 60 rupees to have it erected again. We will be heavily in debt by the time the move is over. But we Indians prefer to move because the Burmese here are bad. Last night I saw one of them trying to steal chickens from his neighbor's house.

An Indian man expressed himself with great agitation and feeling:

> These people think that when we come to Burma we take leave of our senses. We raise the money; we buy the guns; the licenses are in our names, but they keep custody of the guns. What could we do if they sold the guns, or just kept them and told us they were stolen? We would be in trouble with the police. Would they believe us if we told them we gave the guns to the Burmese and the Burmese denied it?
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> There is no justice left in Burma. At least under the British Raj everyone was equal before the law in India and Burma. But now that the Burmese are in power they are loath to punish their own people. An Indian in Yegu caught a Burmese trying to rob his house. The magistrate sentenced him merely for having a gun without a license and he went free in two days.

According to the same informant, in the two days since the Indians had decided to leave Tadagale, the Burmese had rifled the house of one of them. This was confirmed by other Indians, who expressed their feelings about the Burmese of the village in similar vein. At one point in an interview with one of the Indians, a Burmese woman passed and picked up some sticks and bamboo poles at the site of a dismantled Indian house. The Indian said, with great bitterness, "If a Burmese can pick up free a pinch of dirt which belongs to an Indian he is delirious with joy; he thinks he has gotten the better of an Indian.

Further inquiries indicated that the Indians of Tadagale were moving to a nearby community, where the Indian minority was considerably larger than in Tadagale. Although they admitted there was danger of banditry there, too, and that the Burmese might not be friendly, they felt that where there were larger numbers of Indians there was less chance of abuse by the Burmese. Many Burmese in Tadagale, according to the Indians, had begged them to re-

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Indians

621 consider, because they did not want to lose the Indians as customers for their paddy stalk and as a source of manure for their gardens and fields.

●563 The headman of Tadagale, when queried as to the reasons for the departure of the Indians, shrugged his shoulders and said simply that they were afraid, despite the plans for village defense, that their animals might be injured in the event of any fighting between villagers and bandits.

Within a few days, the Indians of Tadagale had all departed; and in the vacant spaces where their houses had stood, the Burmese were eagerly at work erecting buildings of their own.

Social Change

175 631 622 626 Prior to effective British rule in Lower Burma (about 1830), the local autonomous unit was the village circle, consisting of several villages under the authority of a headman. The office of headman seems to have been hereditary in fact, although elections were held. That is to say, headmen tended to be elected in a particular lineage. Rule was through personal relationship between the headman and the villagers. Under the circle headman was a council of elders, appointed by him, one from each village in the circle. Disputes were almost entirely settled by arbitration and compromise, rather than with any concern over the abstract legal right and wrong of the case.

621 Within the village, a system called 'ten-house heads' was operative. This system appears to have been operative through British times, but at least since 1948 has lost effectiveness. Tadagale houses are strung out along a main path, and the ten-house division is such that the houses belonging to one group are mostly contiguous. The head of each ten-house section acted as a kind of deputy to the headman and sat on the council of elders.

175 631 622 With the coming of British rule, much of this changed. They established a hierarchical system, in which there were, in descending order of size, nation, division, district, township, village circle, and village. All officials at each level were appointed from the capital, even down to the village level, where the headman was made an appointed civil servant. He was paid on a percentage basis of his total tax collections and fines levied. The circle headman had police power and judicial authority in petty crimes.

175 692 A judicial system was introduced by the British to replace the old informal arbitration. With an almost total disregard for indigenous institutions and customs, the British established a territorial system based upon law. The loosely structed and informal system of old gradually broke down.

669 631 182 Early in 1948 Burma gained her independence. Since that time the country has been in a state of disorganization. The civil strife has brought about an almost complete breakdown of administrative function on many levels. Certainly the ties of the village with higher units have been curtailed. One indication of this is the fact that the headman no longer submits reports with any degree of regularity to higher echelons, as was required under British rule. Even the local ten-house heads council has largely ceased to function. It exists, but is scarcely used.

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

IV

RELIGION

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The people of Tadagale are overwhelmingly Theravada Buddhist in faith. The exceptions are the Indian minority, who are largely Hindus. There are three Indians who profess Mohammedanism, and three Indo-Burmans and one Pakistani of like faith. Being Burmese and Buddhist are almost identified in the thinking of the majority, as evidenced by the fact that almost all replied 'Burmese Buddhist' to the question, 'To what people do you consider yourself to belong?'

In discussing the religious life of Tadagale, realism calls for emphasis upon actual religious beliefs and behavior, rather than any extended setting down of the formal theology of Buddhism. The latter has been done in any number of specialized works, to which the interested reader may refer. Here we shall refer to Buddhist precepts insofar as is necessary to illuminate religious beliefs and practices of the villagers.

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The Five Precepts or Commandments. Almost all villagers know well the fundamental Buddhist injunctions against the taking of life in any form, the consumption of alcohol, illicit sexual activity, theft, and prevarication. These moral rules are, of course, sometimes breached. In Tadagale, the use of alcohol, sometimes to excess, is perhaps the most notable instance. The 'good Buddhist' does not, however, seem to experience feelings of guilt or pangs of conscience in such matters. Rather, the following of the moral precepts has instrumental value for him, in relation to his accumulation of merit and his reincarnation after death.

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Merit. One's behavior throughout life determines one's store of merit, and this, in turn, determines one's reincarnation after death. Morally proper behavior, such as the following of the five basic commandments of Buddhist faith, is regarded as contributing to one's store of merit and thus enhancing one's state of reincarnation after death. Religious acts, such as making daily offerings of food to the monks, saying prayers, and attending the pagoda festivals on the important sacred days are likewise considered to increase one's merit. Breaking the moral precepts, irreligiousity, acting selfish or quarrelsome, detract from merit and accordingly tend to lower one's state in reincarnation.

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Such is about the extent of the average villager's lay conception and understanding of the moral code and the ideas of the afterlife in Buddhism. He has little or no knowledge of the detailed concepts of reincarnation, with its elaborate gradationary ladder leading from the four states of punishment up to the ultimate achievement of Nirvana. Such theological learning is the property of the monkhood and of a few laymen who spent more than the usual few years as pupils in the monastic school.

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Functions of the Monks. The functions of the Buddhist monks in the village may be conveniently classified as three-fold: formal education; officiation at certain rites; and providing personal advice and guidance to individuals.

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With respect to formal education, the monks of four monasteries close to the village conduct schools which are attended by a considerable number of

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1898 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

density of population, the means of communication, and other matters. But a bazaar within reach there must always be, for it is only there that most articles can be bought. The bazaar is usually held in a public building erected for the purpose, and this may vary from a great market built of brick and iron to a small thatched shed. Sometimes, indeed, there is no building at all, merely a space of beaten ground.

The great bazaar in Mandalay is one of the sights of the city. The building in which it is held is the property of the municipality, but is leased out. It is a series of enormous sheds, with iron roofs and beaten earth floor. Each trade has a shed or sheds to itself. There is a place for rice-sellers, for butchers, for vegetable-sellers, for the vendors of silks, of cottons, of sugar and spices, of firewood, of jars, of fish. The butchers are all natives of India. I have explained elsewhere why this should be. The firewood-sellers will mostly be men, as will also the large rice-merchants, but nearly all the rest are women.

You will find the sellers of spices, fruit, vegetables, and other such matters seated in long rows, on mats placed upon the ground. Each will have a square of space allotted, perhaps six feet square, and there she will sit with her merchandise in a basket or baskets before her. For each square they will pay the lessee a halfpenny for the day, which is only three hours or so. The time to go is in the morning from six till eight, for that is the busy time. Later on all the stalls will be closed, but in the early morning the market is thronged. Every house-

16:Fielding Hall G-3 (1885-1890) 1893 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

231 aboriginal wild pony as to be incapable of very much training. But they are willing; they will go for ever, and are very strong, and they have admirable constitutions and tempers. You could not make a Burman ill-use his pony if you tried, and I fancy that to break these little half-wild ponies to go in cabs in crowded streets requires severe treatment. At least, I never knew but one hackney-carriage driver either in Rangoon or Mandalay who was a Burman, and he very soon gave it up. He said that the work was too heavy either for a pony or a man. I think, perhaps, it was for the safety of the public that he resigned, for his ponies were the very reverse of meek—which a native of India says a hackney-carriage pony should be—and he drove entirely by the light of Nature.

563 231 493 So all the drivers of gharries, as we call them, are natives of India or half-breeds, and it is amongst them that the work of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals principally lies. While I was in Rangoon I tried a number of cases of over-driving, of using ponies with sore withers and the like. I never tried a Burman. Even in Rangoon, which has become almost Indianized, his natural humanity never left the Burman. As far as Burmans are concerned, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals need not exist. They are kinder to their animals than even the members of the Society could be. Instances occur every day; here is one of the most striking that I remember.

489 There is a town in Burma where there are some troops stationed, and which is the headquarters of the civil administration of the district. It is, or was

342 MAHA-GIRI, is found in nearly every house (a junior member of a
776 family need revere only the symbol of the senior member of a family).
782 A dried coconut with attachment stems is placed in a basket, the top wrapped with a KAUNG-BONG (Head-wrap) of red and white cloth streamers and the basket hung on a nail to the primary corner post of the house. It must be adjusted correctly, and periodically sprinkled with sandlewood water. An interesting story explains the use of the coconut symbol.

713 MAUNG TIN DE, a blacksmith of great powers had two beautiful sisters who he feared would be coveted by the king of the city in which they lived. He asked them for this reason to remain in seclusion. One day he returned from work to find them gone. He became very angry and pounded his anvil till the city shook and the people suffered from earache. For a while he eluded persuit but was finally caught and burned to death. Afterwards he became a powerful nat called MIN MAHA-GIRI with powers of protecting households. Since the coconut signifies coolness and thirst-quenching it came to be offered to the nat who had died from fire.

MIN MAHA-GIRI is consulted if sickness or other misfortunes visit the family. At such times the head of the family checks the coconut offering to make sure it is in good condition. If not this is remedied for much misfortune could be the result of MIN MAHA-GIRI's displeasure at being neglected. When a journey is contemplated he is also appealed to for protection. A lesser nat YON GIN O is in charge of the kitchen and more specifically the hearth. Ko Maung Than knew little of this
● [563] nat since it is of minor importance or not considered in Mon households.

342 The home is very important as a place for socio-religious functions
[788] many ceremonies involving groups of people are observed or in part
[574] take place in the house (see below in socio-religious section). Social visiting is also common and much enjoyed. Hospitality, related to but differentiated from charity, gains merit for the host. There is a saying that visitors "come only when the home is pleasant."

512 The home, of course, performs a major "function" as a sleeping
805 place, and there are many beliefs and observances in connection with
513 sleep. The evening hours are divided into LU NYAT THET SEIK (children

the bereaved bring with them gifts of money and in this way seek to help them to defray the funeral expenses of which the funeral feast held 7 days after the death is most expensive. Sometimes these visitors are so generous that the householder does not need to contribute anything at all. Some people, however, prefer to reserve the right to pay for burial expenses of someone in the family, and put out an announcement requesting neighbours to refrain from making monetary contributions. 764 621 476

The community activities in the refugee camp are mainly of an economic nature - discussed in the section on "Work". The solidarity of the village is lacking and the feelings of obligation and responsibility beyond the basic economic ones are absent. 621 722

In Patheo there are ethnic groups other than the Burmese. There are a few Karens, Indians of Madrasi affiliation, as well as a few Chinese who run stores. The attitude of the family toward these other groups are reflected in the following interview (Note: the concept of "religion" is used here as meaning "general way of life." 621 563 186

Q. "Does U Myaing know about other religions such as Christianity and Hinduism? If so, what is his attitude towards them.

A. "I don't understand them well. We are with our own religion. We are country folk. We understand our religion only. We don't understand other religions.

Q. "What is your attitude towards other racial groups living in the village?

A. "I don't hold any positive attitude. I harbour no evil thoughts. We hold them to be the same as we are.

Q. "Would you like to go back to live among the Karens you spoke of just now?

A. (D.A.Z.) "Of course not. Lots of Burmese were left behind. We wouldn't dare to live among the Karens."
(U.M.) "Some people do not dare to live among the Karens, but we do."
(D.A.Z.) U.M.)"We don't have enemies."
(D.A.Z.) "There are Karens who are friendly with us."
(U.M.) "Say that we lived together. We lived together."
(D.A.Z.)"Though we have no enemies we feel afraid. In the present turmoil and confusion people no longer know each other."

Q. " Do the Karens differ from you in religion?"

A. (U.M.) "Our religions do not differ. The religion of Karens in our place and our religion do not differ. It is Buddhism."

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Q. "We want to know your relations with adherents of other religions. There are people who worship Indian gods, Chinese gods, and Christians - what is your attitude towards them?"

A. (U.M.) "I don't hold any attitude at all."

Q. " Do you get on well?"

A. (U.M.) "Yes. We get on very well. They buy our goods and we buy theirs. They rent our fields and cultivate them. If there are cows they are borrowed and lent. We live together like this - buying and selling."

Q. "This is about the people. How about their attitude towards their gods?"

A. "I have no attitude."

Q. "Have you never thought about it?"

A. "I have never thought about it. Their god is only slightly different. There is only one god. There will be only one god. Only people differ somewhat. Our outlook should be improved. After all, his god is my god and my god is his god. Only the races differ. Even one race is divided within itself."

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The relationship of the family to the state in Pathwe involve taxes, military service and voting. In the pre-war days, U Myaing and family had to pay a capitation tax, levied at the rate of Rs. 5/- per year for a married couple, and Rs. 2/8 per year for a bachelor of twenty and over. Children and unmarried women and widows are exempt from any tax whatsoever. There was a land tax on cultivation fields - levied at the rate of annas 2 per acre per annum, and also on garden land at one anna or two annas per acre per annum according to the value of the land. The tax on INS - or purchase of the fishery rights amounted to a figure anywhere between Rs. 3000/- and Rs. 12,000/-. U Myaing is not liable to taxes because of his low income, he retains his voting privileges for general elections.

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The family was moved from Pathwe to the refugee camp because of the insurrection and has been under the protection of the government since coming to camp. The proportion of food and shelter benefits, which they receive from the government, has been noted under those headings. According to government policy, shelter is provided for the family, and food for all except one adult who is expected to work.

871

Education for U Myaing's children is provided by the government both in Pantanaw and in the refugee camp. Only the cost of the books has to be paid by him.

Children in the Pathwe village learnt their lessons at the government school. This school, which was on THA-GYI-BET side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. The school house was built by contributions taken in the village. When U Myaing was young, they had to pay a tuition fee of four annas each to the schoolmaster every month. Now government has taken over the cost of educating the children, and fees are no longer required of them. The children only have to bring their own books and pencils. There are three teachers in the school; one headmaster and two assistants. The headmaster draws a salary of Rs. 100/- and the assistants of over Rs. 90/- each. There are other schools across the river but they teach only up till the fourth standard, and children of higher grades have to come to THA-GYI-BET to attend school.

369 and women too did the same, and wore their HTAMEINS breast high.
291 Here except for the refugees, he does not see much of this except when
562 people are bathing in the public water hydrants. When it is hot the men wear T shirts and the women wear light garments.

369 U Myaing says that the ordinary city dweller cannot do as much
464 hard labour as the average villager. For example, he cannot carry
461 a bag of rice on his shoulders if suddenly called upon to do so.

The workers from Rangoon are much more acute than the workers from the village. They speak and understand English and Hindustani and so get to know of any possible job long before the others. The villagers do not have these advantages, and so have to join work only later and they are placed to work under them.

●563 As far as U Myaing is concerned, there is no racial animosity
464 towards Indians and workers of other races. This is due to the fact that there is no racial discrimination on the part of the employers, the first suitable applicant being given the work.

369 He finds that Rangoon has a much more equable climate than
132 Pathwe. In Rangoon it is not as cold as in Pathwe, where in the cold season it was very cold even though they lived in a proper house and kept all the doors and windows shut. He says that they would not be able in Pathwe to live in an open dwelling like they do at present.

369 Their relatives in Rangoon keep to themselves a great deal.
571 They work on their own and earn on their own. In Rangoon each family
602 has only sufficient for itself. We cannot help them financially and neither can they help us much. When we go on a visit they can invite us to join in a meal or to partake of sweet tea, but they would not be able to lend us fifty or a hundred rupees. In Pathwe we could lend each other any amount up till a thousand five hundred rupees and that free of interest. These loans also need to be repaid only when it is convenient to the debtor. It would be inconvenient to have to repay a loan while the money was in the form of goods."

159 U Myaings eldest daughter has returned to the camp because the
369 woman who owns the cheroot rolling business has temporarily closed it
602 down and gone to Pantanaw with goods like onions, prawns and textiles. Since the girl is not sufficiently dexterous to find work elsewhere as

These are his "eggs" and it is his duty to guard them while the others cluster around trying to get them away from him without being caught in the attempt. If they are successful in getting all the eggs away they then go and hide them. The "turtle" then has to go and look for eggs while the rest follow her giving encouragement clapping hands and shouting the chant " LEIT U PY UK LO LEIT MA SHAR THU KHIN HYAR NOO NE NOO NEY (Because her eggs are lost the poor female turtle is tearfully looking for them). If the child succeeds in catching any one in an attempt to get an egg away that person becomes the turtle. 527 858

In Pathne they celebrated the water festival, but they did it in moderation and were satisfied if a person got slightly wet. MEN-LET-HSAUNG was given in the village. 527

U Myaing did not save any money in Pathne. Sometimes he made a great deal of money and sometimes he made nothing at all. Sometimes if he had a lot of money he would loan it out to some one else to be returned in three or four months time if possible. Sometimes these loans continued unsettled for about a year. Only in Rangoon do you have to pay interest. In Pathne if you did not borrow from chettiars you did not need to pay any interest. U Myaing did not go to the chettiars. He borrowed only from his relatives. There were people who went to raise money from the chettiar money lenders and some of them lost house, cultivation fields etc. because they could not pay the high rate of interest and had the mortgages on their property foreclosed. 454 426 [563]

Analysis of Social and Ceremonial Activities

The refugee camp may be regarded as a new village composed of families who came from villages in the delta similar to Pathne but placed in an urban setting. The other refugees have the same understandings as to socio-ceremonial activities as U Myaing and the basic 621 722 [369]

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

668 178 536* [213] [171] for scholars to rehandle it. The introduction of cheap printing in Lower Burma was of the utmost importance to the drama. Printing had been known to the Burmese long before the British administered Lower Burma, but it was an expensive and laborious affair. The British introduced cheap and efficient printing presses, worked by cheap but skilled Indian labour. Once the stage of transition had been completed and economic prosperity had returned, printing spread all over Lower Burma and widened the circle of admirers of the drama, encouraged the study of the great plays in their original form as distinct from the modified versions of the professional actors, and created a public eager not only to see but also to read plays. As a result of these various causes scholars began writing plays again after 1875, but their efforts were not very successful until Saya Yaw in 1877 wrote and produced his *History of Thaton*.

2. *The History of Thaton*

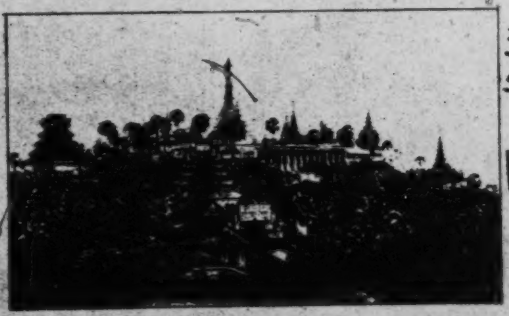
536* Saya Yaw's story is remarkably original. In order that the question of succession should be settled beforehand, the young king of Thaton is advised by his ministers to take a consort without delay, and he promises to consider the matter. In the next scene, a brother and sister, belonging to a semi-civilized tribe on a neighbouring mountain, are entering the city to seek employment, for they have been starving since the death of their parents. The scene shifts to the centre of the city, where a rich nobleman and his wife are quarrelling and blaming each other, because they have no children to inherit their wealth. The characters are comic, and the scene is humorous. As they stand shouting at each other, the brother and sister pass by, and they are struck by the girl's beauty and the young man's nobility of bearing. When they discover that the strangers are without parents and are looking for employment, they, in great [563] joy, adopt them as son and daughter. In the next scene, merchants from the Shan hills arrive at the city, singing and dancing their own songs and dances. They soon dispose of their wares, and they are making preparations to leave when the brother arrives. He becomes friendly with the merchants, and after listening to their tales of romance and adventure in their hills, he decides to accompany them to their home. He asks permission to go from his foster-parents and his sister, who reluctantly let him go. The foster-parents cry, and the brother and sister bid farewell to each other in songs of great tenderness. In the next scene, the chieftain of a Shan state is sorely

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

88. AGED YAHAN CARRIED ON YIN.

The majority of the *kyaungs* and buildings of Burma are constructed on piles. The country at large is mountainous. The Burman race monopolises the flat lands in the basin of the upper Irawadi — "the narrows" (*Anyá*)—in the same way as the Shan races do in the sphere of their influence and the Mun (or Taláing) race in the south (Pegu). The quasi-aboriginal races occupy the hill-land and mountains. The plains-dweller settles as near as he can to the natural waterways with which Burma is abundantly provided. In the drought the rivers recede to great distances from their flood-level margins. In order to be close to the channels, the houses have to be on high piles. The races of Burma adhere to their practice of pile-building even on elevated sites, such as those of the temples. The Burman wood architecture appears to have developed through the exigencies of pile-building and under the influence, as regards decoration, of an exotic masonry style. The Burman style possesses a naïve charm recalling the art of the "ages of faith" in Western Europe. It has a certain resemblance to the wooden church-building of Norway. The style was in full vigour up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Since that time novelties of type and manufacture have crowded in faster than they could be assimilated into the indigenous arts, on which they are foisted crudely (Nos. 60, 99).

The affinities of Burman art above referred to, to the art of mediæval Europe, are extrinsic only. The "aspiring" character of the floriđ ornament, the quaint figures in their labyrinths of tracery, recall the crocketed niches and fantastic gargoyles of the



89. TEMPLE HILL.

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25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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187. TURNING ROLLERS FOR THE CANE-MILL.

Almost the whole out-turn is bought up by Chinese settlers for distilling spirits (p. 156).

Of the edible wild fruits of Burma, after the wild mango the chief is *kanazô*. There are many less succulent kinds of wild fruit, for the most part acid and astringent. The cultivated fruit-trees need to be protected from cattle till high above the ground. But so rapid is the growth that in two to five years the trees are established. Tamarind, mango and jack are the commonest fruit trees and need little care; they are wayside trees in the villages. Clumps are planted in the *kyaung* enclosures and at camping-places (*sakán*) for their shade. In the dry zone the tamarind attains the proportions of our oak (No. 309), as does the mango in the moist regions (No. 304). A congener of the mango, the *mayán*, is also planted. The jack-tree attains moderate size, but, although evergreen, its shade is light. The cocoanut palm (*kôn*) has to be artificially germinated by watering the nut for several weeks before planting, for it rots if left to soak. It needs fencing for some years and does not bear for ten to fifteen, which is a comparatively long time for labour to await its return in the tropics. Burma grows only a small proportion of the cocoanuts she requires; the rest are imported from India and the Nicobar Islands. Dry cocoanuts cost one-half to one anna, and green nuts as much as two annas each. The water of the green nut is a refreshing beverage, frequently offered to the *yakán* and in hospitality to strangers. The betel-palm (*kun*, areca) is more extensively propagated. Limes, citron and pumelo, jujube and guava, cashew and bael are planted about

188. COLLECTING JACK-FRUIT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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207. BRINGING IN ROE-DEER (DYI.

then the bathing-places have to be staked in. Wild elephants make a road dangerous at times. Elephants are captured by pit-falls. Decoys are also used in various ways; small animals are detached from the herd by their means and then kept going until they are worn out, and can be tethered and hobbled for taming. The breaking in is accomplished by pinning the elephant between trees or stout posts where it cannot lie down, keeping it underfed, and giving food as the reward of docility. Young elephants born in captivity—as occasionally happens—are broken in, in the same way, about the sixth year, when half grown. The stock is replenished from Siam, where the wild herds are larger, and the business of catching is more developed, and where also elephants breed more frequently in captivity. The elephant-breakers and trainers are Shans, and the words of command Shan. Rhinoceroses (*kyan*) may be found about the sources of streams in the evergreen hills; occasional tracks are seen. A tapir occurs in the forests of Tenaserim. Wild dogs (*canis rutilans*) occur in a few localities. There is no wolf, fox, or hyæna, and no jackal east of Arakán. There is a larger and a smaller black bear (*zwè-wun*), very rarely encountered, and not aggressive. There are several species of wild cat (*taze-dyaung*) large and small, and a few species of weasel. A small porcupine is found (*pyu*). The huge bamboo-rat (*paw*) is dug out of its burrow by the hill people. There are many tribes of monkeys and gibbons; the weird cry of the latter is the characteristic sound of the evergreen forest. Squirrels are the only wild animals

208. MEASURING THE PANTHER.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

331. LATHE POTTERY.

comes upon bricks, and on nearly every hill bricks bear evidence that at some time a *zedi* had crowned the top. In the moist region the disintegrating effect of the vegetation is such that frequently no indication remains of the form of the original structure. The use of brick doubtless came in with the early Buddhist architecture exemplified at Pagán. The brick-fields are on the confines of the rice-fields, and of the same character as to soil, a light loam. The work begins in November after the ground has dried. The surface soil is rejected and the earth dug with mattocks a yard or two deep. The clods are soaked in water and trodden into a doughy mass with an admixture of rice husk. The bricks are moulded direct on the ground, which has been smoothed beforehand, and are left to dry in the sun (No. 181). Before stacking the dried bricks, the lower or rough edge is trimmed with a *dá*. The commonest size of brick is 12" × 6" × 1½". A burn consists of ten thousand bricks and sells for about forty-five rupees. In the dry zone, brick has always been used for house-building to some extent, unless when prohibited by the government. In the south, the brick-work is invariably plastered over with *ingade* to prevent the clay mortar from washing out. Now that bricklaying in Pegu has passed into the hands of masons from India, lime-mortar is usual.

The limestone rocks which are a feature of the Eastern Peninsula, rise abruptly from the plains to heights of one to three thousand feet (No. 107). They are honeycombed with fissures which facilitate quarrying. During the floods, boats can approach and be loaded with the stone. Lime is used for whitewash, plaster, mortar, and for chewing

332. FANCY POTTERY (SHAN).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

The cordage used in 283

215. LIMESTONE ROCKS.

Burma is twisted from the bast of the *shaw* tree (*sterculia* varieties). For guys, stays, and standing rigging of boats, rattan is employed. Split rattan is used for strong ties, and withes of split bamboo (*hnî*) for common ties. The *shaw* rope is three and four stranded, and is twisted with native gear very like that of our own rope-walks. A long and even four-stranded rope is made by three men. This furnishes a good example of mechanical advancement, when compared with the method of the hill-people, who require six men to twist a much shorter rope of the same number of strands (Nos. 219–20). Shaw rope is smooth, but has not the flexibility of cocoanut-fibre and manila-fibre ropes, which are now imported. Fine cotton yarn is twisted into cord for making nets. A coarse jute fibre (*paissan*) is also twisted for net-making.

[171] [439]

Silk-culture is under the ban of Buddhism for the same reason as fishery. The greater part of the silk yarn used is brought from China, but a good deal is produced locally by the *Zabîn* or *Yabîn*, a people speaking Burmese and resembling the Burmans in most respects, but despised by the latter. They are settled along the foot of the Pegu Yôma hill-range, on its eastern and western slopes, where they make clearings in the forest (*taungya*) and plant the mulberry. They prepare a yellow silk yarn which, coarse and knotty as it is, is preferred for the best class of Burman silk cloths (*lunlayd*, No. 132). The raw silk fetches thirty-five to forty rupees a viss. It is a perfect washing silk in all its dyes and wears a lifetime. In a few localities, silk-weaving is a special industry practised by men as well as women. Settlers from Manipûr

288 231 [779] 554 463]

216. LIMEKILN.

288 563

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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217. PLASTERER'S SCAFFOLD ON ZEDI

(*Kathé*) excel in this work and form colonies for the industry. Attempts have been made in Europe to imitate the scroll-patterns on the Jacquard loom, as well as to print them. But the imitations fall too far short of the original, which is nearly the same front and back. The best *lun-tayâ* silks cost ten to fifteen rupees the square foot, which makes two hundred to three hundred rupees for the *pasô*. Only an inch or two a day can be woven. Italian methods of carding, dyeing, and finishing silk, were introduced by the late King, Mindôn Min, and have helped to develop an important industry in Mandalay. Stripe and tartan patterns are woven in this way, chiefly from China silk. Fine texture and delicate tints are aimed at, rather than rich colour and design. The *pasô* of

[435] twenty cubits, one cubit wide, costs ten to twenty rupees.

293 The Burman umbrella (*tî*) is on the Chinese model—a bamboo frame with
[171] paper cover. The Chinese umbrella has a thin paper cover, the Burman has bast-paper, which outlasts several of the other. But the Chinese umbrellas are cheaper, better waterproofed, and sun-proof. The Burman *tî* is waterproofed by occasional oiling with crude petroleum. A waterproof size made from the fruit of the *tî* is used for fixing the paper to the ribs and the cotton twines that connect them. The red, the

[186] gilt and the white umbrellas are emblems of state. The

[554] first two denote official rank, according to the number assigned. Such umbrellas

[532] have stems of turned wood, six to eight feet long, to allow of the *tî* being borne over the officer on horseback or in his chariot, by attendants on foot (No. 375). The

218. SCULPTURING MARBLE IMAGES

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

325 rivalry has sprung up between the towns in casting large images. For the best bells, a bronze consisting of four parts copper to two of tin is used. The alloy is enriched—as they fancy—by pious donors who cast silver into the melting-pot. Ordinary bells are made of brass; images also are cast in brass. The

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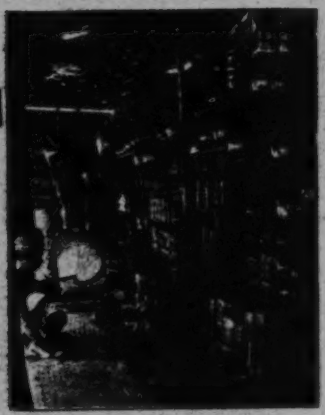


225. LACQUER-WARE DEALER.

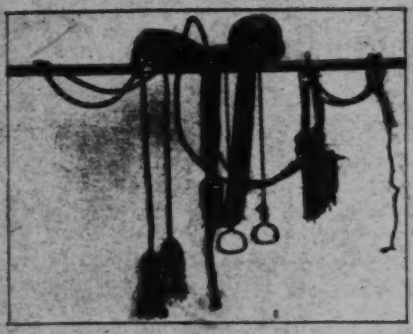
226. SANDAL-SEWER.

alloy consists of about 70 per cent. copper to 20 of zinc, and 10 of lead. The image or bell is modelled in wax as thick as the metal is intended to be, upon a core of clay. A shell of clay is plastered over the wax with the needful supports between the clay surfaces at intervals. When the clay has dried, the mould is heated and the wax run out, ready for casting. The crucibles are of clay, of about two hundredweight capacity, and are heated by a forge-blast. The Burman castings are seldom sound, and never so fine and clean as those of the Shans. Though the bells are defective in tone, the *kyisi* (Nos. 22, 86) and the sound, hammered

[563]

227. BRASS-IMAGE FOUNDERS.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese A24



328. BURMAN HORSE-FURNITURE.

gongs (*maung*, No. 322) have very sonorous qualities. Copper and brass utensils are not used by the Burmans for cooking, but brass is used for fruit-platters, water-cups and bowls, betel-boxes and spittoons, mortars, scales and weights, cow-bells, and furniture for horse and bullock harness.

The import of iron and steel began centuries ago, nevertheless blades of Shan steel and manufacture are still accounted the best. With the exception of Shan settlers, the Burmans were the only blacksmiths of the country till the Chinese blacksmiths arrived. The hill-people depended for their chief implement and their weapons upon the dominant races. The Burman forge is the same as the Shan, on a bigger scale. The hearth is at the ground-level, with a pit in front, to enable the smith to stand up to his work if needful. He does most of it sitting on a peculiar round-backed seat to the right of the blast. The anvil is like a hammer-head set upright in a block of wood. There is a trough shaped like a canoe for quenching the work and the tools. The hammers are from one to five pounds, the pincers of the universal pattern. There are the ordinary punches and sets. The blast is on the plan of the bamboo blast in No. 235, but has large cylinders of palm trunks in which pistons, packed with feathers, are worked alternately. The Chinese blacksmith had already adopted the European anvil and heavy sledge-hammer for forging iron axles and tyres, anchors and grapnels. These the Burman has adopted in turn. The bench-vice is also universal. The Chinaman adheres to his horizontal wooden box-blast, fitted with valves like a double-action pump, whereas the

329. BURMAN BLACKSMITH (OLD STYLE).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma
Burmese AP4

388. CANOPY OF GREAT ZEDI (Vl. pp. 80, 101).

thing like a spoke-shave (*daing-dyaik*), for the rough shaping of the blades after forging, to save their files. The blacksmiths make the axes of the country also. The old Burman axe consists of a long-handled wooden mallet with an iron tip like a small spade. The smiths also make spear-heads for the hill-people, iron shoes for ploughs, mattocks and hoes, tires and axles of carts, dee nails for boats, nippers for sugar-cane and betel-nut, and other tools. They do repairs of locks and fire-arms. A special class of *iron*-work is making *tî* for *zedi*. The tinsmith's trade was unknown in Burma until fifty years ago. In Pegu it is still in Indian hands; but in Mandalay the Burman tinsmiths are unequalled.

Argentiferous galena is found in Burma, but the ore barely repays working for the sake of the lead. The silver used in Burma and most of the gold is imported from China, India, and Europe. A dozen villages in different parts of Burma get a living by sifting the sand of streams which bear gold. A broad thin wooden dish shaped like a flat cone is filled with sand and gravel, and worked at the water-level with a rotary movement, by which the lighter material is driven out centrifugally. The dish is filled and refilled, and after seven or eight hours' work as many grains weight of gold flakes will have accumulated in the depression at the centre. The out-turn of a steady worker is three to five tikals of gold in the season.

389. MOUNTAIN CASCADE.

The stock in trade of the gold and silver worker consists of a bamboo blast, clay crucibles, blowpipe, solder and flux, aquafortis and mercury, hammers, punches and anvils of bronze and iron, wire-plate and beading-plate. Bullion is furnished by the customer, who pays from one half up to the full weight, in

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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202. ROPE-STATION ON THE SALWEEN (KYODAN).

current, a remarkable device is employed. Two ten-foot handspikes, with a shoulder two feet above the point, have mooring-rattans from each end of the raft, one hundred feet long and an inch thick, bent on to them. One of these is sent ashore from the forward end of the raft and worked like a plough in the bank, going deeper as the raft slews round and the tension increases, and so stopping its way by degrees. If the first attempt fails a second is made from the other end of the raft, which is then the forward one. Arrived in port the logs are dragged up the mud-banks by elephants. But when the path is blocked, a powerful elephant sometimes carries a log bodily. The whole of the operations of bringing the timber to market are combined by a timber-broker (forester, *thigyaung*).

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Teak cuts readily, though it blunts the tools very soon. There is little waste. Sawn planks are displacing bamboo for the better-class houses. Sawyers earn from one-half to one rupee a day. The indigenous carpenter's tools were a small adze (*pègôt*), chisels and gouges (*sauk*), awls (*hsu*), and a rough saw (*khwa*), besides *dâ* and axe (*pauk-sein*). The Burman adopted the Chinese plane (*yut-haw*, "selecting-shave") with the Chinese straddle bench. The English carpenter's rule is also general. When the impulse to good house-building was given by the production of cheap planks, the immigrants from China got the whole of the work. The Burmans have begun to oust them from the heavy carpentering and from the joinery as well. Ordinary Burman carpenters earn ¾ rupee a day, the better workmen 1 to 1¼ rupees a day, compared with the Chinaman's 1½ rupees. The wood-work is left

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203. BINDING THE LOGS INTO RAFTS.

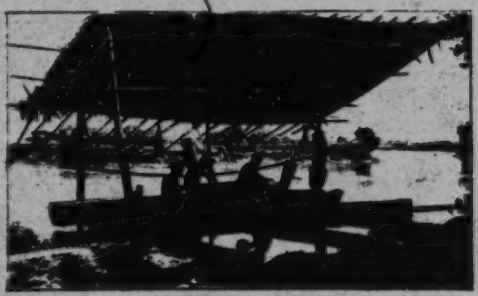
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

264. TIMBER-RAFT.

plain or is oiled with crude petroleum. A wooden house of the modern Burman pattern costs from three hundred rupees upwards; a bamboo house only twenty to sixty.

The Burman turning-lathe is of the usual primitive type; two poppets sliding in a bed, with centres to hold the work, round which a cord passes from the simple treadle-bar to a springy lath or bamboo overhead. But of late, mandril-lathes have been constructed after models in the steam-mill workshops (No. 187). Mechanical construction has great attractions for the Burman, and is stimulated by the high wages of labour. The foremen sawyers at the steam-mills are Burmans, the other hands natives of India. Menders of clocks and sewing-machines are in all the towns. An engine-erecter, who had set up machinery in most countries of Europe and Asia, said he had nowhere met the same natural aptitude for handling machinery as in Burma (*cf.* p. 10).

The floral wood-carving of Burma is remarkable for its freedom and spontaneity. Rich as the floral tracery is, the animal grotesques are laboured and deficient in fancy. The carving is done in teak-wood when it is meant for fixtures; otherwise, *yamané* is preferred. The tools employed are chisel, gouge, and mallet. The design is traced on the wood with charcoal, gouged out in the rough and finished with sharp fine tools, using the mallet for every stroke. Teak-wood and *yamané* have a coarse grain, in which fine detail cannot be rendered. Small and delicately elaborated figures are carved in sandal-wood and also in ivory. Whole tusks are carved over with figures of the Buddha and are dedicated in the *kyaungs*. In some of these the figures are modelled in a single piece under an



265. SAWING UP THE LOGS.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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287. COUNTRY SALE-DEPOT.

about three million rupees. At present both wood-oil and crude earth-oil are being superseded by kerosene. The crude earth-oil is used for preserving woodwork. But its place is being taken by the residues from the local refineries, now established in Rangoon.* Travelling pedlars hawk the silk goods of Burma Proper and all sorts of fancy nicknacks from the sea-ports to the villages of the interior. The approaches to the temples are favourite resorts of stall-keepers of all sorts of wares, especially of wax-tapers, plain and moulded, gold leaf, coloured paper flags and flowers for the votaries to decorate the shrines with, and toys wherewith to gladden the hearts of children—an act of merit befitting the shrine of religion in this cheerful land. In sad contrast to the gaiety of the booths is the spectacle of the lepers who beg for alms. The prominence of these unfortunates at such places creates a disproportionate impression of their numbers, high as these are (p. 41). The offerings dedicated on the occasions of *Shinlâung fêtes*, festivals, and funerals, make the trades of manufacturing and distributing the requisites of the *kyaung* very important ones. The wares collected in the *parôikaya* shop used to be representative of the manufactures of Burma. But of late, imported goods—crockery, glassware, lamps and clocks—have become a regular part of the *kyaung* furniture, and are offered in meaningless profusion. This has helped to bring the *parôikaya* trade into the hands of foreigners.

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288. ROLLING CHEROOTS.

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Every year, after the floods have subsided, Burman dealers establish dry-

* See *The Occurrence of Petroleum in Burma*, by Dr. F. Noetling.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

290. PAREIKAYA DEALER.

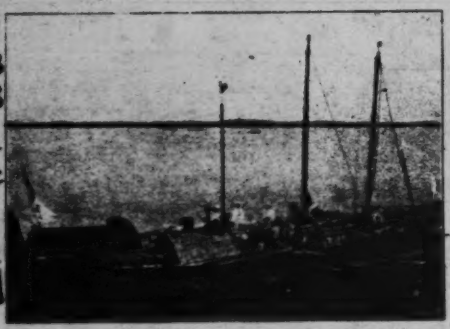
weather sale-booths (*taweit*), for trade with the hill-people, at central points as far from the towns as canoes can navigate the stream. They sell dried fish and *ngapi*, salt, oil, pease, sugar, spices and tobacco, pottery and crockery, plain and coloured yarns, needles, thread, cloth of every sort, elastic belts, under-vests, matches, tapers and soap, kerosene oil, pencils, pens, ink and paper, playing-cards, beads, spectacles, mirrors and fancy articles from Europe, besides biscuits, sardines, and condensed milk. All these wares are sold in the larger villages as well. Sale-booths are set up at every festival, chiefly for refreshments. But there is nothing corresponding to the fairs of India and the West.

Both men and women smoke tobacco. Children begin at four or five (No. 21). The Burman cheroot (*selaik*) is a roll five to eight inches long and an inch thick, consisting of chopped tobacco-leaf and the pith of the tobacco stem, with a wrapper made of the inner skin of the spathe of the betel palm, or the spathe of maize, or else the leaves of *pauk*, *thanát* or *bamboé*, which are smoothed on a hot stone. The Burman exquisite toys with this cheroot much as the Japanese does with the fan. The fan is not affected by men or women in Burma. Good cheroots are also rolled of plain tobacco-leaf, in the Indian way; they are very strong. Unlike the Shans, Karéns and Chinese, with their pipes, and the natives of India with their hookah, the Burman sticks to the cheroot. Tobacco is grown on the silt banks left dry by the rivers (Nos. 191, 264); but the bulk is imported from the South of India. A delicate "birds-eye" tobacco is prepared by the Karéns and Shans on the North-East; it is shredded green, and does not keep well. At intervals on the main lines of

291. BAZAR SCENE, BURMA PROPER.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma AP1
Indians
Burmese AP4

Ba 167 563 463 Ba Bse 511 Bse [501]



888. BRINGING THE PADDY TO THE RICE-MILLS.

of every class and caste, with his foreign connection and longer experience, has an incalculable advantage over the untravelled Burman. Beginning with a lower standard of comfort than the Burman—squatting on the bare soil where the poorest Burman makes a floor, wearing cotton where the other wears silk, and being able to improve his original condition upon half the return that the Burman expects for his work—the Indian immigrant finds land worth his labour which the Burman leaves waste. The influx of races whose religion it is to multiply, without regard to the prospect of subsistence, must speedily result in lowering the scale of life for everyone in Burma—a country of which it may now be said that "a large share of the happiness of each individual is derived from the consciousness of the well-being of other individuals." (Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I., p. 297.) Commencing by hiring the cheap Indian labour to reap his corn, then to plough and till his fields, the while emulating his neighbours in superfluous works, the Burman is apt to end by becoming the debtor of his servant, and mortgaging to him his lands. It seems to many that there is no escape for the Burman from the Indian flood that now menaces his country. But up to the present no class of Indians has attempted to deal with land subject to the vicissitudes of the Burman riverain soil. It is unlikely that people of less versatility and resource will establish themselves there. In 1879, when the vagaries of the Irawadi had submerged the cultivation on the Panhlaing creek some twelve feet, and the eaves of the houses were under water, the cattle were saved in hasty platforms made in

Bse [426] Ba Bse 563 241 731 Bse [361]

889. FORESHORE AT THE FACTORIES.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 API Burma API
Indians
Burmese AP4

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trees. All that the villagers asked for (and of course got) was exemption from land-tax. Another hopeful feature is that the Burman is not devoid of the quality of self-criticism. With the Indian retail trader comes also the wholesale merchant—Persian, Parsi, Súrati, Chetti and Bania. And the Burmans at large accept the situation, never dreaming that by travelling abroad and seeing for themselves how other nations manage and how they fare, they might learn to conduct their own business, and help to save Burma from sinking to the level of proletariate countries. Natives of India and China have learned so much in their capacities of assistants to European merchants that they are getting the retail trade in European goods to themselves. Even as importers, with their agents in Europe, they are making themselves independent of the European merchant in the East. The European spheres of activity on which Burmans

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909. EUROPEAN TYPE OF HOUSE.

have entered are saw-mill enterprise and the profession of advocacy, in which latter they have attained a high standing.

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To the Burman, the native of India is the foreigner *par excellence*—*Kalâ*—and shares the disrepute that a stay-at-home people commonly accord to the foreigner, especially when he is a needy one. To them he is the dog that eats the crumbs which fall from his table ("*Kwe-Kalâ!*"). While the Chinaman, despite his uncouthness and uncanny parasitic trade, is considered an eligible man, *Kalâ-mayâ*—nigger's-wife—is a term of reproach. The *Kalâ* half-breeds are called *Zerbâdi*. They appear to possess fewer good qualities than either of the pure races. The Euro-Burman half-breeds are called *Bayinji*—(Feringhi, the Indian equivalent of Frank) explained by the Burmans as *Bayin-gyi* (adherent of) the Great Prince (the Pope).

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Europeans are the only remaining foreigners whom the Burmans encounter, excepting a few Armenians, Jews and Malays. Armenians were beginning to play

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 · APl Burma AP1
Burmese AP4

Bq a *rôle* under the kings of Burma, who farmed out customs and taxes to them. Bse Symes, writing in 1800, mentions that there were then one hundred Europeans in Rangoon. With the exception of a few merchants and masters of ships, the ●563 European standard at that time was not a good one. At present the authority of the handful of British in Burma ramifies into the old native channels of government by which the mass of the population is reached.

Bse 504

290. HARBOUR SCENE.

29: Slater M-4 (no date) 1951 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

771 It is necessary, therefore, at the outset of our inquiry to correct this impression.

A writer on Comparative Religion is dependent on the experts from different fields, and Dr Bouquet is only repeating what a number of commentators on Burmese religion have been saying for the past fifty years. But if we examine their statements we find that many of them merely reflect, without further evidence or critical examination, an opinion expressed by a European official in a Census Report of 1891. This opinion was emphasised by another Census official, Mr. C. C. Lowis, ten years later:

"The Burman has added to his Animism just so much Buddhism as suits him and with infantile inconsequence draws solace from each in turn. I know of no better definition of the religion of the great bulk of the people ... than that given by Mr Eales in his 1891 Census Report, 'a thin veneer of philosophy laid over the main structure of Shamanistic belief.' The facts are here exactly expressed. Animism supplies the solid constituents that hold the faith together, Buddhism the superficial polish. Far be it from me to underrate the value of that philosophic veneer. It has done all that a polish can do to smooth, to beautify and to brighten, but to the end of time it will never be anything more than a polish. In the hour of great heart-searchings it is profitless as the Apostle's sounding brass. It is then that the Burman falls back upon his primaeval beliefs. Let but the veneer be scratched, the crude animism that lurks below must out. Let but his inmost vital depths be touched, the Burman stands forth an Animist confessed."[1]

771 782 [563] [177] Mr Lowis' opinion is based on a critical examination of the situation, and it cannot be lightly gainsaid. He also refers to the prevailing Animistic beliefs of the surrounding hill tribes who still infiltrate into the plains of Burma, a factor which encourages the survival of primitive ideas among the Burmese themselves. This survival is not to be denied. It is impossible to live in Burma without coming across evidences of Animism, sooner or later — the cocoanut, surmounted by a red cloth, still hung in most Burmese households as a *Nat* offering; the 'bus driver halting his vehicle to run across the road and place a little bouquet of flowers at the foot of some tree which is the shrine of a local spirit. Most of these practices are innocent. Occasionally, however, one has a grim reminder of more fateful beliefs. Burmese students once explained to me, reluctantly, [761] that they had desisted in their efforts to save a drowning boy because it was obvious that he had been seized by the *Nat* of the lake.

[1] *Census of India Report*, Vol. XII, (Burma, 1901), Part 1, by C. C. Lowis, chap. III, p. 35.